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Dance and Dancers

NOVEMBER 1959 This month's full ballet guide 2s

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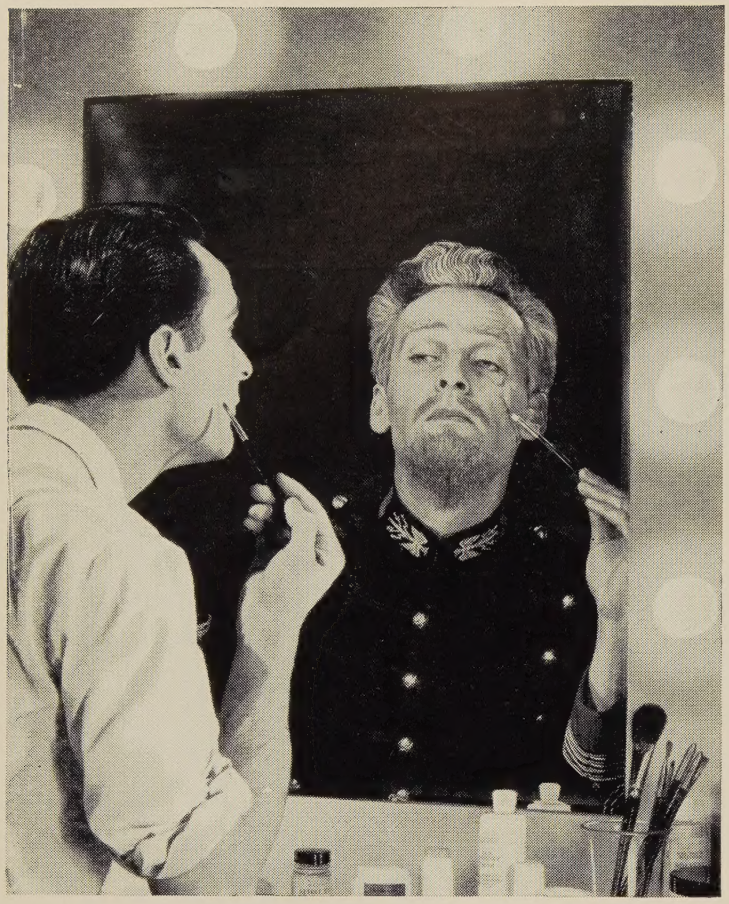

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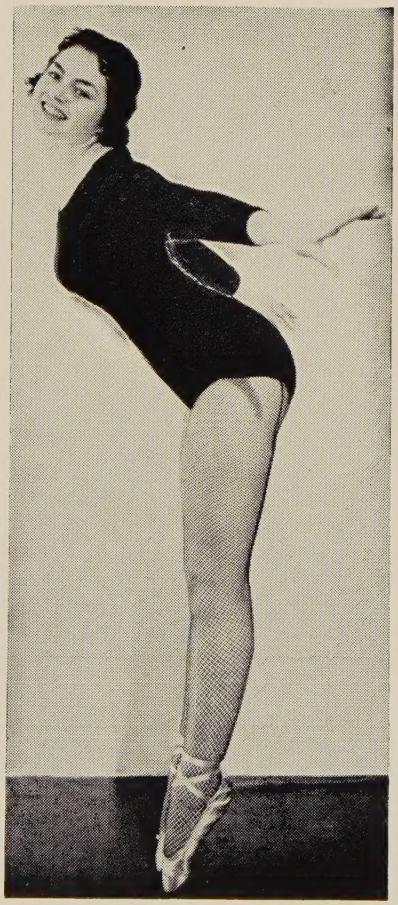

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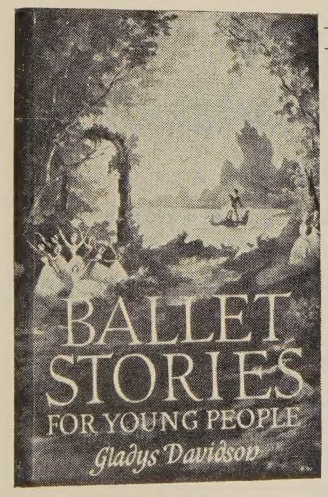

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Personality of the Month

As CYRANO DE BERGERAC. *Photo : Lido.*

ROLAND PETIT

IT is now nearly fourteen years since we in England had our first glimpse of Roland Petit and his works. It was at the Adelphi Theatre we first saw him, and by a coincidence it is at the same Adelphi that we are awaiting his first full-length ballet *Cyrano de Bergerac.*

Both as a choreographer and, perhaps to a slightly lesser extent, as a dancer, Petit has left his mark on the whole post-war period of French ballet. *Les Forains, Le Rendezvous, Les Amours de Jupiter, Le Jeune Homme et la Mort, Carmen, Le Loup* — all these are among the key ballets of our time, and the influence of Petit would be difficult to over-estimate. Few choreographers can have been so flattered by imitation, and his brand of ballet — the slickest imaginable mixture of sex and classicism — has proved a trend-setter the world over.

In some ways Petit is the European equivalent of Jerome Robbins, because while he has never had the pure choreographic gifts of the American, he has for many years been aiming in the same direction of integrated " total theatre ", and has matched, in some cases foreshadowed, many of Robbins' experiments.

Yet it may well be that Petit's greatest gifts are those of an artistic director. Ever since he left his first mentor, Boris Kochno, in 1948, and formed his own company, Les Ballets de Paris, his work has been outstanding for the number of painters, poets and musicians he has introduced into the ballet theatre. His taste is exemplary, and no one has selected his collaborators with greater care or success. His recent appointment to the Paris Opéra, as adviser on dancing, depending on just what that means, could completely transfigure that institution and give the Opéra company a front-ranking place among the companies of the world.

However, whatever Petit decides to do there can be no doubt it will always be stimulating, alive and, above all, theatrical, for he breathes the theatre like other people breathe air.

NOVEMBER 1959 10th YEAR OF PUBLICATION Vol. 10 No. 11

Dance and Dancers

Editor: PETER WILLIAMS *Associate Editor:* CLIVE BARNES
Assistant Editor : E. C. MASON
WORLD'S LARGEST SALE IN THE FIELD

Is the one-act ballet doomed?

THERE is a growing feeling in England, a feeling which is also spreading to other countries, that the days of the one-act ballet are numbered and that the future lies only in full-length all-evening works. It is true, of course, that this feeling has been brought about by the recent reluctance of the British public to attend in any great numbers anything other than three-act works. At Covent Garden, at Festival Hall and even in the British provinces the pointer is decidedly away from short works. The fact that Roland Petit, whose all-evening *Cyrano de Bergerac* will be seen at the Adelphi this month, has become aware of the new pulse-beat would seem to underline this fact. If Petit, that great master of the one-acter, turns away from them, then it appears to set the seal on their banishment. If this is really true the future looks a bit dismal, and it will mean that we have sunk back to a state of affairs that was prevalent in the last century and that we are unlikely to see little more than one creation in any year.

On the other hand don't forget Ballets : U.S.A. (not that you are likely to in *this* number) ; that company brought no full-evening works and yet the London public scratched and scrambled in the turmoil of trying to get tickets. There did not appear to be much sign of a dying cause about all that. Perhaps then there is something a bit awry about the " growing feeling ".

What are these three-acters that the public clamour to see? Mainly *Swan Lake* and *The Sleeping Beauty,* and that is more on account of the Tchaikovsky scores than because of anyone who is dancing in them. I doubt whether *Ondine* without Fonteyn will fill houses for an equal number of years and we know that *The Prince of the Pagodas* has never been a great money-spinner. So it seems that the composer has the most to do with it, and since the great master Tchaikovsky there has only been one composer who could create a three-act ballet of equal genius — Igor Stravinsky, and he will probably never do it. None of this really convinces me that the future lies only in full-length works.

Provided a lot of re-thinking goes on the one-act ballet is far from doomed, and the answer lies in what is said in the conclusions about Ballets : U.S.A. on page 16. The British public has shown in the straight theatre that it wants integrity and involvement. Ballet, as it has frequently done in the past, must learn a lesson from its sister art, and if only those who direct its destiny will realise this *immediately* there is no reason why the public should not attend one-act and three-act ballets with equal fervour.

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UP IN THE AIR : Jerome Robbins, left, with the whole of his Ballets : U.S.A., who are jumping into the air, possibly in an expression of pleasure at their remarkable reception throughout Europe.

THAT WAS *BALLETS: U.S.A.* THAT WAS

For two weeks — one in Edinburgh and one in London — Ballets : U.S.A. hit Britain like a whirlwind. Here are various aspects of the seasons — an interview with JEROME ROBBINS on TV, reviews by CLIVE BARNES and PETER WILLIAMS.

TELEVISION PREVIEW

BEFORE Ballets : U.S.A. came to London for its triumphant season at the Piccadilly Theatre, and while it was appearing at the Edinburgh Festival, JEROME ROBBINS was interviewed by critic PETER BRINSON. This interview was recorded and shown on the BBC's fortnightly television "Monitor" programme to whom we are indebted for their permission to reproduce it here :

Brinson : Mr. Robbins, in what I've just seen, and also in the newspapers, the thing which all of us noticed about your company is the excellence of the dancers, as artists and as dancers. What do you look for in your dancers?

Robbins : Well, first of all of course I look for a very good, strong, classical ballet technique as a foundation, and after that I look for versatility, so that they can dance in a number of styles. I look for a directness and a simpleness of manner, an economy of movement, so that there's no chi-chi or phoney mannerisms of false personalities applied to it.

Brinson : Is there something in your own background experience which makes you look for these things — which makes you think that they're specially important?

Robbins : Well, yes, I do feel they're important. I guess it comes out of my own experiences as a dancer. For many years I danced in a company which performed predominantly so-called "Russian Ballets", and for years I went around being a gypsy and having to cavort, grimace, smile and be passionate, and I rather felt that in America we had a way of dancing of our own, and about material of our own which expressed our own life and our own, let's say, folklore.

Brinson : Now, I'd like to ask you about that. You said just now that — you mentioned many different styles of dancing. When you were writing about this company you said that you aimed to show to Europeans all the variety of styles of American dance. What do you mean by that?

Robbins : Well, I don't think that any *one* company could show all the variety, but within the programmes that we do perform, I'd like to show that we can dance a classic technique, that we can dance a theatrical jazz technique, that we can perform comedy, that we can perform lyricism — all within the range of a company which is quite small really, nine boys and ten girls.

Brinson : Now, when you're using these techniques, what themes particularly attract you?

Robbins : Well, right now — in the way I'm working at the present time, a theme of pure dance attracts me. In that, there's —

Brinson : What do you mean by "pure dance"?

Robbins : That the dance communicates to the audience in a way that no other theatre art can. In other words, it cannot be done better as a play or as an opera or as a piece of music or as a painting or any of the other arts, that the emotion in the audience is aroused and evoked through new arts, through things that cannot be said, and that movement to movement makes the emotion rather than the specifics or a silent movie technique.

Brinson : Now, it's sometimes been said about your work that you tend to turn to the seamy side of American life, even make heroes out of gangs, as you did in *West Side Story* — do you think this is a fair criticism?

Robbins : Well, no I don't, and right now — now we're not talking about ballet but about theatre, and *West Side Story* happens to be about intolerance, which is seamy only in that it — it's not only in American life, but in life all over the world. The problem of intolerance and the price one has to pay for having it in one's culture is an enormous one and a tragic one, and that is the subject of *West Side Story.*

Brinson : So that you're saying in fact that a musical can pass a comment on life, that your ballets deal with the emotions of people?

Robbins : Well, now, I don't know if I can make any particular rules about it. I think that one just has to create on what one moves in. If you try to do it differently in saying "Well this would be a smart thing to do, a chic thing to do or the theoretical thing to do" — I don't think it would work.

Brinson : Why? How about your abstract ballets, because there you say nothing at all.

Robbins : Well, no, I don't agree, because I don't think any ballet says nothing. Because first of all it's being performed by humans, which immediately communicates something. But I use the word "abstract" not meaning "non-representational", but I mean abstract in the sense that I have abstracted from any subject the core, the essence of the feeling, the atmosphere. There are no specifics, let's say the jazz ballet that we do is abstract in contrast to the specifics of *West Side Story.* However, it happens to deal with teen-age problems, not particularly juvenile delinquents, but the dance that you just saw is evocative of the manner in which a boy and girl might dance a popular jazz dance.

Brinson : And this is an abstract ballet?

Robbins : Yes. There's no specifics, there are no characters, there are no situations. There is mood, there is atmosphere, there is a strong emotion.

Brinson : But those movements that we saw, what did they mean exactly?

Robbins : Well, this is rather the — "cool" way in which we dance — "cool" means : don't show what you're really feeling. "Play it cool" is what we say — play it without showing your effect — showing the effect — a lot may be going on underneath, a lot of emotion, a lot of passion, perhaps even a lot of sexuality, but don't, don't show it.

Brinson : Now these movements — where do they come from? How do you evolve them?

Robbins : Well, my company is trained as a classic ballet technique company. We do class every day the same as, I suppose, your Royal Ballet does. It's the same technique. The movements depend on which ballet I'm working upon. The jazz ballet, and I think it's a misnomer, jazz, it's danced to jazz music and based on popular jazz dancing, but the movements, the source of the material, is from our popular dancing in America which has spread all over the world.

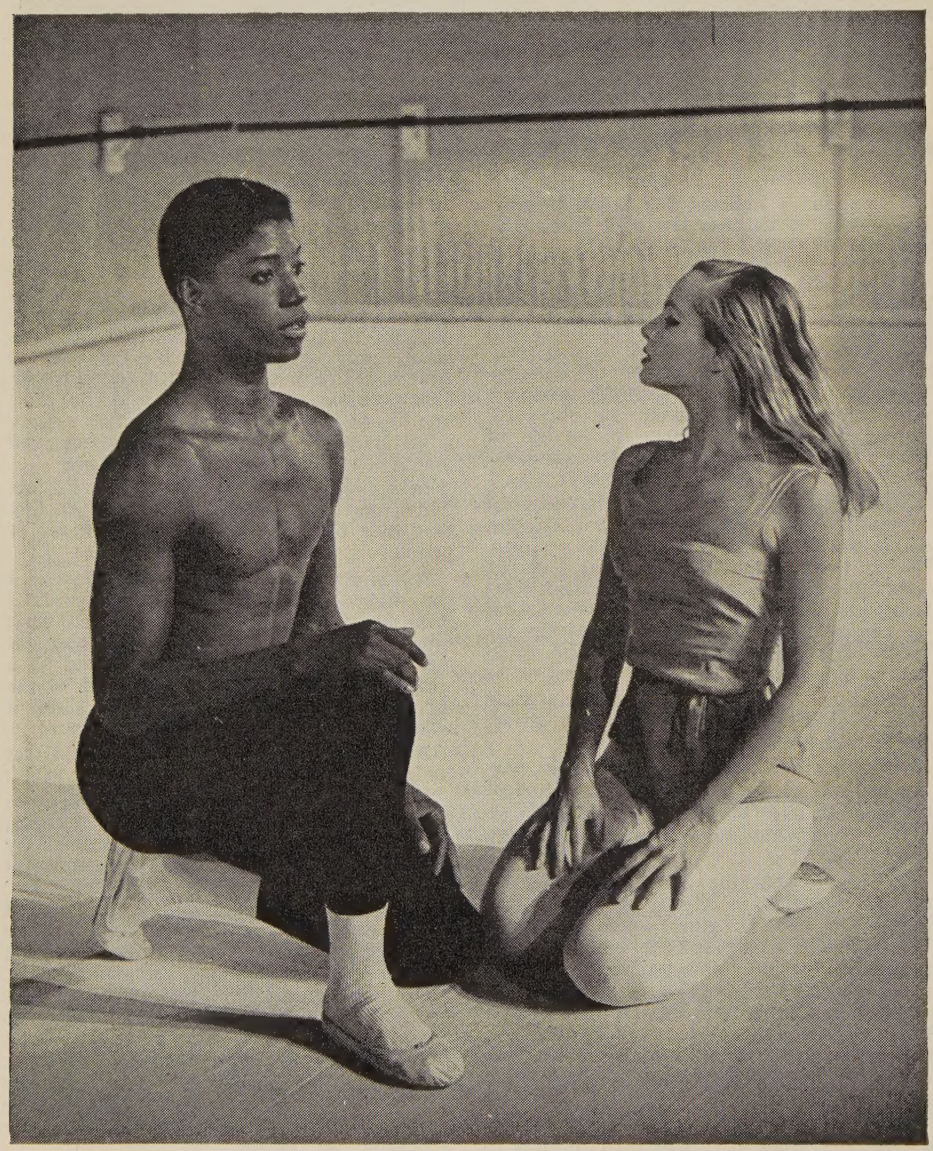
Brinson : So that once you've got the movements in your mind, how do you mould them on to the dancers then?

Robbins : Well, I work in the studio with them — creating the work, creating the steps, extending them, trying them, the dancers follow, copy what I do. I think about probably one quarter of the work that I choreograph appears finally in the ballet. I think three-quarters of it gets thrown out in my attempt to find a better way of expressing it.

Brinson : But in point of fact you ask your dancers to do a great deal more than just dance — in a musical you ask them to sing and speak and act as well — isn't this a bit much?

Robbins : No. I think that a theatre performer, whether they're in opera, play or ballet company, should be able to do and perform all the theatre arts — I think it's a terrible thing to have a singer come on stage and just use their voice and a dancer just to come on stage and just use their body. I think they're on the stage for a dramatic purpose, whether the thing happens to be comedy or no matter what it is, there is a dramatic premise, and they should be able to project that.

AFTERNOON OF A FAUN : *On this and the opposite page are pictures of John Jones and Wilma Curley in Robbins' contemporary version of Mallarmé's poem to Debussy music.* *Photos : Mike Davis.*



Brinson : So that if you got a first-class singer who wasn't able to dance or even move very well, would you reject them from your company?

Robbins : Well I would if it called for them to perform something dramatically. I wouldn't if all that they were called upon within the material that I was working on was the use of their voice.

Brinson : Is this something which is a trend in the American theatre?

Robbins : Yes, I think it is, and the dancers have led the way somehow in America, but there is a trend in America to fuse all the theatrical arts.

Brinson : I don't see why it should be the dancers who've led the way. Why shouldn't it have been the singers, for instance?

Robbins : Well, the dancers are a little more daring, and a little freer and a little more aggressive in their desire to extend themselves. In America they've gone and studied acting and studied singing, and find themselves now in the position of leading the way as far as the trend in musical theatre, in particular, is concerned.

Brinson : And is this something which affects also the directors of musicals?

Robbins : Oh yes, now more and more the choreographer is becoming the director.

Brinson : Like yourself?

Robbins : Like myself, for instance. But I'm not the only one in America, and I think that a choreographer, because they work with movement, lights, music, painting, etc., has one of the best eyes to be the focal person concerned with the theatrical enterprise.

Brinson : So that in this form of theatre now in America would you say that the dancer at this time occupies a rather special place?

Robbins : Yes, more and more. I mean if you line up the musicals in New York you'll find perhaps that in more than half of them, a dancer has a leading rôle, in which they sing and act besides dance.

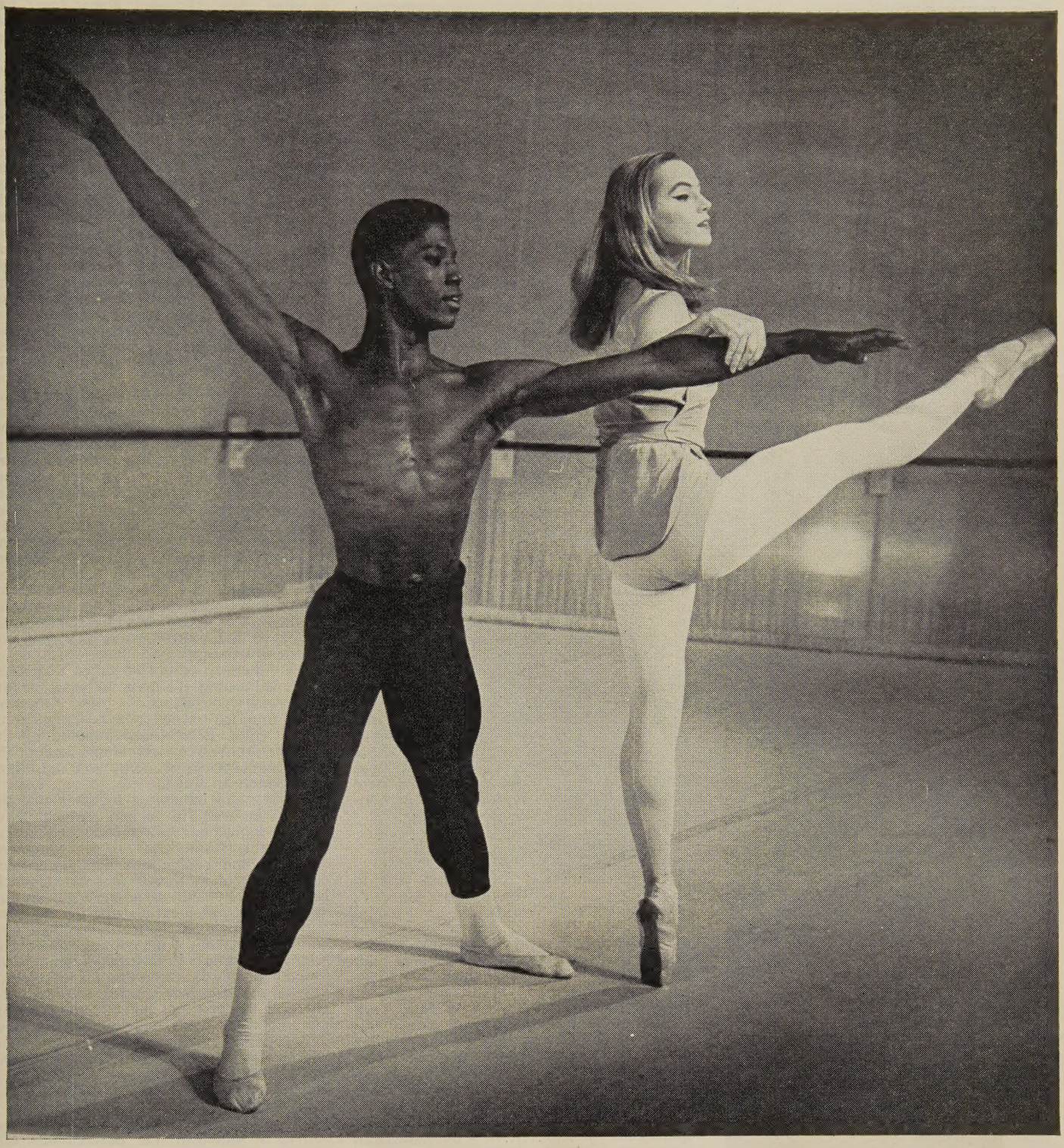
Brinson : Mr. Robbins, thank you very much.

Robbins : You're very welcome.

Edinburgh and London

ONE minute there was G. B. L. Wilson at the Festival Club in Edinburgh telling me that one of Robbins' planes had ditched in the Mediterranean — and the next minute, or so it seemed, there was a smooth-spoken journalist from *Time* magazine asking me if I thought Robbins' London season had not been the greatest thing since Diaghilev — I told him I missed out on the Diaghilev opening ! The fortnight between Wilson and the man from *Time* passed in a whirl as I vainly tried to cope with the tightest working schedule of my life — so far. Looking back at this mad rush so many impressions stand out, small incidents, fragments of dialogue, that I will always associate with the excitement of Ballets : U.S.A.'s first visit to Britain.

After 36 hours of doubt — will they, won't they, can they, can't they — the company's Edinburgh opening at that mausoleum of a theatre, the Empire, was, to put to its rightful use a word not often gainfully employed, fabulous. The curtain rose on a naked stage, indecently stripped of everything but the bare anatomy of its mechanism. Jerome Robbins, wearing a sweat-shirt and grinning in nervous, lopsided apology, shyly strolled on like the first character in a Thornton Wilder play. That night before each ballet, Robbins came on and explained to the audience what it *should* have been seeing. He just gave the

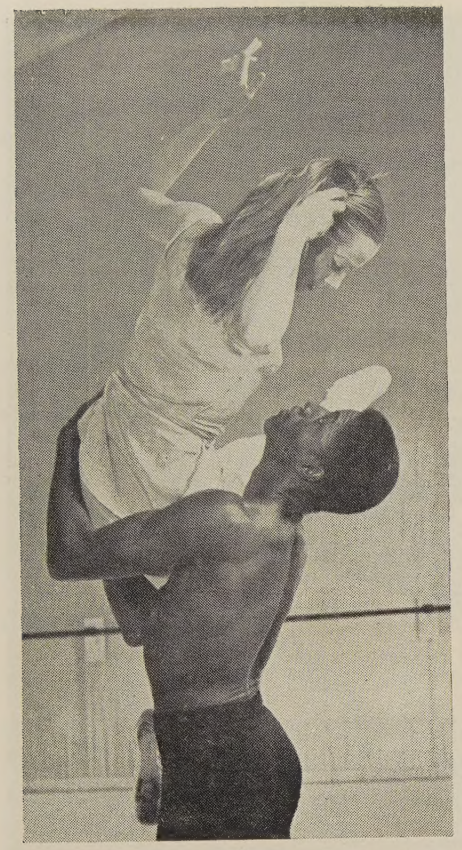


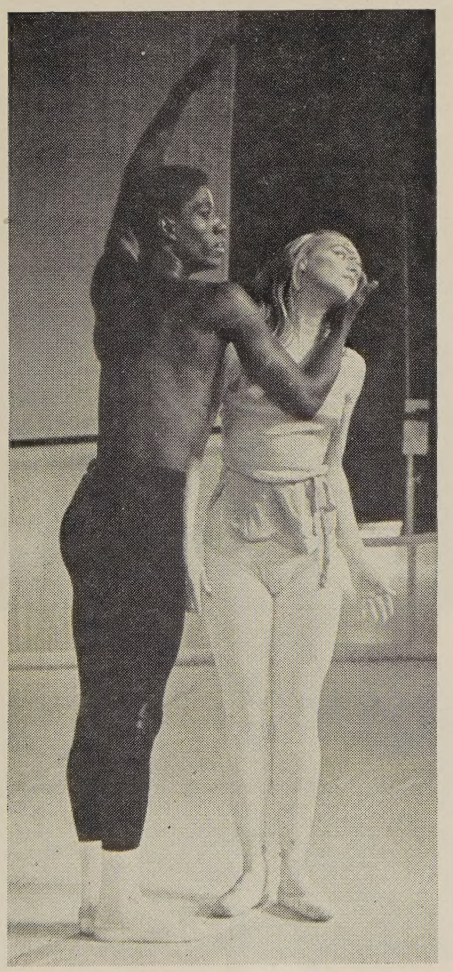
outline, leaving the rest to the audience's imagination. The theatre was only two-thirds full, but by the end it seemed as though most of that two-thirds was shouting. It was a dream of a reception, even though it was to be eclipsed in London just seven days later.

The atmosphere and tension of that first Edinburgh night is as elusive to capture as an electric eel. Even the intervals were pretty exciting with everyone talking and most people looking something special. I recall glimpsing Mary Clarke looking excited and cool, and Richard Buckle looking excited and hot, while A. V. Coton was just looking as enigmatic as only a first-night Coton can. At the end Noël Goodwin — the only one of us who had seen the company before in Spoleto last year — rushed off to the Edinburgh Office of the *Daily Express,* and I remember reading his first enthusiastic notice before settling down to a night at the typewriter on my own account.

Leaving Edinburgh early the next morning, I picked up the papers at the airport — the notices were on the whole good ; Coton, with one minor reservation, was full of praise in *The Daily Telegraph,* Goodwin had been printed more or less uncut, except for his by-line, in the *Express,* Freda Pitt seemed slightly equivocal in the *Mail,* as did the anonymous critic of *The Times.* (In London, *The Times* made handsome amends, even to the extent of publishing a third leader on the company's importance.)

The London opening at the Piccadilly Theatre turned out to be one of those spine-chilling occasions when *tout Londres* appeared in over-dressed and under-dressed force. The Press (backed by Robbins' own appearance on TV) had started a box-office stampede with their notices on the Edinburgh season, and that first-night London audience just could not have been more





receptive ; I have never known an audience awaiting quite so expectantly the prospect of being raped with rapture. The company had — by some miracle of logistics — got together nearly complete replacements for the scenery and costumes they had lost somewhere in the Mediterranean. Unfortunately Jean Rosenthal's set for *Afternoon of a Faun,* which had been lent to Robbins by New York City Ballet, arrived just too late to be used on the opening night, and could not be pressed into service until the Tuesday.

The performance went off like a short-fused bomb, and by the next day no one who could read the papers was in any doubt that something of singular importance had happened in the London theatre. For myself I found the company even more impressive on a second viewing than on the first, yet I noticed a perhaps significant undertow to the general surge of approval. Quite a few people who had not seen the company in Edinburgh felt it had been oversold, and the ones I spoke to were nearly all part of the hard *corps* of inveterate, intelligent ballet-goers.

After the first night other engagements unhappily prevented me from getting along to the theatre until the last two performances on the Saturday, by which time audiences had taken on the look of "Who's Who in the Theatre". The all-too-brief season ended in a blaze of glory with the company dancing more superlatively than ever.

As a matter of fact, Ballets : U.S.A. received by far the warmest critical reception of any visiting dance company since the war ; they also shared with the Bolshoi company and the Royal Danish Ballet the distinction of being the only foreign group playing London seasons to sold right out houses. As a matter of personal opinion they, together with New York City Ballet and the Bolshoi, share the distinction of being the most important visiting classic ballet company (Martha Graham, José Limón and the Moiseyev troupe are here placed *hors de combat)* to appear in London during the post-war period.

Background to the Company

THE company was formed last year to take part in Gian-Carlo Menotti's "Festival of Two Worlds" to be given in Spoleto, Italy. The original intention was for it to play the Festival, give a few further performances at the Brussels World Fair and then to return to the States and to be heard of no more. However, such was its success in foreign parts that a New York season was arranged for the group, this being followed by a none too rewarding American provincial tour, after which the company temporarily broke up. It re-formed this year for a second New York season, to be followed by the Spoleto Festival and a much longer European tour, sponsored by A.N.T.A. — the American equivalent of the British Council.

In forming his company — now of 18-20 dancers, all soloist calibre and rank — Robbins held open auditions in New York, and the finally selected dancers came from a wide variety of backgrounds — ballet companies, musicals, films, TV — while all of them were expected to have an unusually wide range of dance technique.

When the company made its first appearance at Spoleto in June of last year, its repertory consisted of one new work by Robbins, *N.Y. Export : Opus Jazz,* two revivals by Robbins from New York City Ballet, *Afternoon of a Faun* and *The Concert,* and one revival from the Ballets Russes de Monte Carlo by Todd Bolender, *Games.* A projected version by Robbins of Stravinsky's *Les Noces* did not materialise. Before the second European tour Robbins dropped *Games* — Bolender's leave of absence from New York City Ballet had also expired — and this was replaced in the repertory by a new Robbins ballet, *3 x 3.* This last work was not however particularly successful and is not at the moment in the current repertory. Robbins intended to produce a new ballet for Europe with a score by Aaron Copland, but the music not being completed on time he choreographed *Moves,* a ballet without music, which was given for the first time during the present tour. Also listed in the tour repertory is a revival of *Interplay,* but this has not yet been performed by the company, although it is in rehearsal.

AFTERNOON OF A FAUN : *Two more studies of John Jones and Wilma Curley. Photos : Mike Davis.*

Ballets : U.S.A. was conceived as an export company and it would not be too fanciful — even though it may be rather too flattering — to compare its relationship to America's national ballet, the Balanchine/Kirstein New York City company, with that between the first Diaghilev Ballets Russes and the Maryinsky Ballet. Not that I, of all people, would want to suggest that the New York City Ballet is a decadent or moribund organisation, while the parallel between American ballet today and Russian ballet half a century ago is bound to fall down almost as soon as you set it up, but just as Diaghilev was then exporting the Russian school, so today Robbins is exporting the American school.

The American school of ballet, which has developed within the past 30 years, is the way Americans dance — the American accent imposed on the common language of classic ballet. It has been imposed by the American physique and temperament, the American outlook, economy and conditions (the "American way of life" if you want it that way), and influenced by social dances, mostly modern in origin, which have become indigenous to America and are as recognizably American as chewing-gum, coca-cola, and Yankee cars. The old division of ballet into three schools (French, Italian and Russian) is now almost as outdated as the even earlier division of Gaul into three parts. In ballet today there are, quite distinctively, the American-Russian School, the Anglo-Italo-Russian School, the Franco-Russian School, the Danish-French School and the Soviet Russian School. Of all these the first and the last are probably the most vital and significant. Schools have only a peripheral, almost fortuitous, contact with subject matter — Russian dancers will frequently employ Russian themes and so on, but the Russianness of their ballet goes much deeper. *Symphonic Variations* is English, *Romeo and Juliet* is Russian and *Moves* is American. Let us take this as a jumping-off point.

Moves

A Ballet in Silence

Choreography by Jerome Robbins.

THIS is a classic ballet within Balanchine's understanding of the term. Form is more important than content, and it is, of course, plotless. The choreography is executed in a free re-working of the classic ballet idiom. There is no characterisation, and no acting ; the emotions expressed by the dancers are incidental, or rather inherent, in the dance. It happens to be performed in silence, yet that is a pretty big "happens".

"You know I *really* only *go* to ballet for the music." Yes, I know you do, Auntie, and so do a lot of other people, but not much more than 70 per cent of the audience on any given night. The small minority of dance enthusiasts in this country are so used to having their pleasures subsidised by lovers of palm-court classics that we tend to overlook that whereas for us ballet music is part of a closely inter-knit visual and emotional relationship, for an immense number of people it represents the answer to a maiden's prayer. Furthermore even when our interest is not centred on the music it is clear that the relationship between music and choreography is chiefly dictated by the aural rather than visual partner.

Music very largely governs the spatial outline, and perhaps more importantly, the emotional colouring of the dance. In certain collaborations (Petipa/Tchaikovsky or Balanchine/Stravinsky) the music has been content to step down a peg, yet this is obviously rare. In *Moves,* Robbins has done away with the musical line altogether. The result is, of course, fundamentally a failure — for you can no more have ballet without music than you can have opera without singing — yet it is also extraordinarily fascinating.

In Edinburgh *Moves* was described on the programme as "A Ballet in Silence", but when the company came to London this was amended to "A Ballet in Silence about Relationships". This is the key to the work. In an interview with *The Times,* Robbins has been quoted as saying: "I wanted the audience to concentrate on movement. I wanted to do two things: one, an exploration of movement that the audience can only interpret as movement . . . two, I wanted to write a ballet about relationships between people — man and woman, one and another, the individual and the group."

Robbins is the only choreographer I know who is so supremely articulate in words that with his programme notes and interviews he almost writes his own Press notices: this boy neither wastes words nor abuses them. Yet the two objectives quoted above seem, until you have seen the ballet, to be contradictory — if a ballet contains nothing but movement that can only be interpreted as movement, then how can it be interpreted as relationships? The answer is that this is not just a ballet without music, it is also a play without acting. The dancers perform their parts *completely* deadpan, and the eddies of emotion, the cross-currents of unspecified, everyman drama that swirl through the kinetic design, are intrinsic in the *movement.*

Here Robbins is saying — I think — here are human beings, men and women. This much is given: now watch these two come together; he puts his hand around her neck so; now he slowly (slowly, mark you, not gently) pulls back her head; look now, they are dancing together; they are "sad"; they "misunderstand" one another; they are "finding" themselves and they leave together. There, you've seen a sort of drama, haven't you? But look again, they didn't *express* a single thing, not a gesture or a grimace carried a story, not a movement was given with emotional impetus or motivation. All you saw was movement, dancing — and everything arose from the imagery and associations you place (you, not Robbins) on muscular contractions and expansions.

The structure of the ballet is very important. Dancers enter in a straight file at the back of the stage; they line up and come forward, they pay their mask-like respects to the audience. Brother, these kids are as cool and formal as Japanese court dancers,

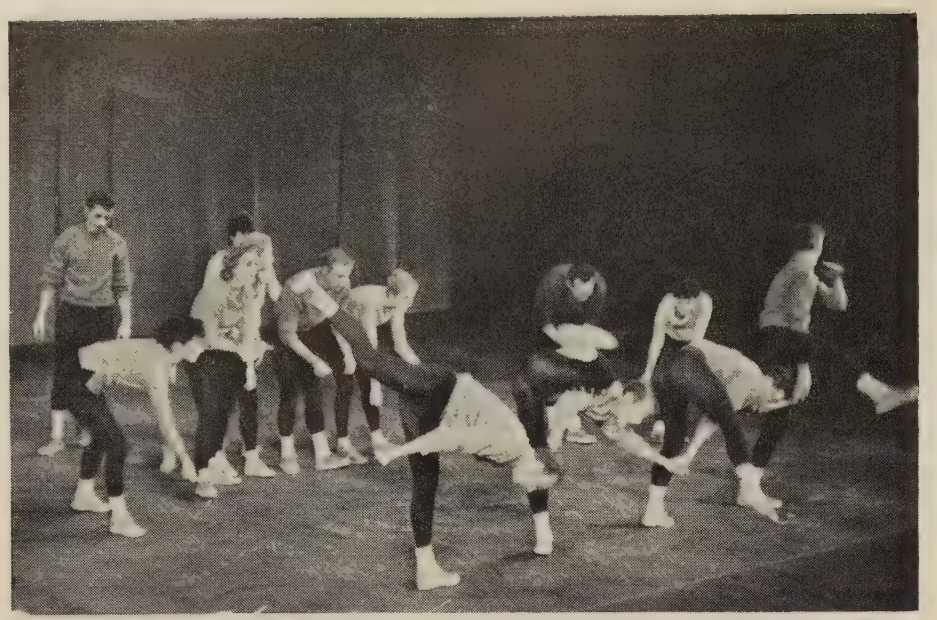
N.Y. EXPORT, OPUS JAZZ: *Wilma Curley and John Jones in a different mood from the ballet on the opposite page. An unusual lift in Robbins' jazz ballet. Photo: Lido.*

which, incidentally, is where I suspect one germinal idea for the ballet arose. The ending mirrors the opening—this is a formal dance with masks.

The movement develops from the movement, just as music develops from music. In a string quartet one instrument responds to another, they cue one another in, they play around with one another's themes, they respond. The dancing in *Moves* is all either sequential or contrapuntal. A chain of movement is started and carried through, sometimes, but rarely, with the metachronal action of wind running through grass, more often along an arbitrary route of dynamic cues — when X does that on this count, Y does this on that count.

Occasionally Robbins employs movement in what might be called sequential counterpoint — in the third episode of the ballet (called the second on the programme) there is a male *pas de cinq.* Four boys jump up in a classical *entrechat* while the fifth boy does a contrapuntal discord (for which Robbins has selected a "frog-sag" expressionist movement possibly deriving from the "Phlegmatic" variation in *Four Temperaments)* which is passed around the five of them one after another, each time they jump up a different boy performs the "frog-sag". The emotional effect of this passage on me, was to remind me what the guy felt like when he first lost the lost chord, or, if you would prefer to take it away wrapped, it evoked an atavistic memory of lost innocence. Of course I am rationalising things that cannot in their nature be easily rationalised. You may as well query what is awakened when you hear a certain passage of music. What I am experimentally, and possibly pompously trying to arrive at is that *Moves,* in my opinion, shows empirically that movement can be used with the same non-specific subtlety that is found in music or, and this is a slightly different and simpler story, about symmetry, asymmetry and planes of movement, in painting.

So what? Well, even if it were so nothing! I think Robbins' experiment would have been justified. But, in fact, I feel that, together with the pure dance interest of Euclidean complexity, the imagery of search, loss and constrained passion that I personally found in this work made it, for me, a most rewarding experience. Earlier I called it a fundamental failure, possibly it might have been better if I had suggested that it



N.Y. EXPORT, OPUS JAZZ : *Two more scenes from the Robbins' ballet designed by Ben Shahn. Picture above by Lido ; below by Mike Davis.*

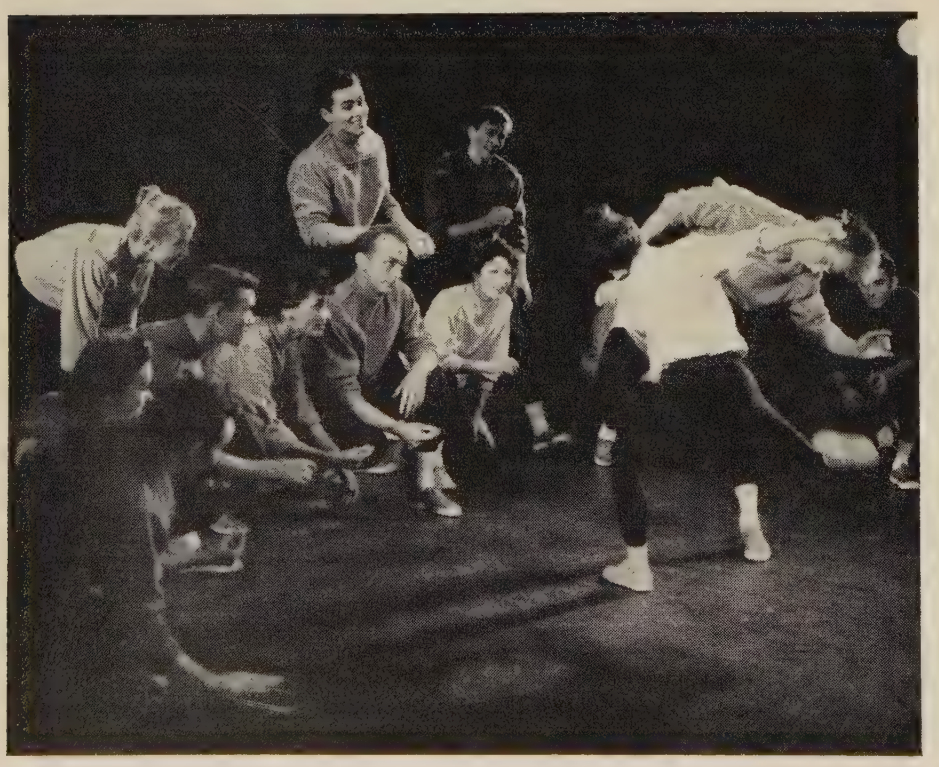
was what biologists call a "sport". It's unique and would breed true — you could make other ballets on these lines with a little bit of genius — but it's a purposeless mutation with no part to play in balletic evolution. A good ballet with music is that much better than a good ballet without music, but *Moves* remains a remarkable experiment.

Afternoon of a Faun

Choreography, Jerome Robbins; Décor and Lighting, Jean Rosenthal; Costumes, Irene Sharaff.

HOWEVER one feels about Robbins' more recent works, it would, I think, be difficult not to recognise *Afternoon of a Faun* as a 20th-century masterpiece. There is something so right, logical and inevitable about the ballet, it is so completely absorbing, so faithful — in its own impulsive way — to Debussy and Mallarmé, and the whole work bears such a happy air of spontaneity, almost of improvisation, that one sees it with a jolt of recognition.

What an improbable fancy Robbins has. Who else could have seen such possibilities in this battered old war-horse of the Diaghilev repertory? For turning his back on Bakst and Greece, Robbins has made it into a poetic miniature of our times. He has set his *pas de deux* in a ballet class-room, with the fourth — the "proscenium" — wall representing the mirror inevitable to such class-rooms the world over. This masterstroke of theatre instantly gives the ballet a strange immediacy — the audience becomes almost involved in its action as it peeps through the mirror at the unselfconscious narcissism of the dancers.



The ballet opens with a young man, alone and relaxing in the heat of day. He catches sight of himself in the mirror and flexes his muscles in self-absorbed, animal contentment. A girl enters, and they dance together but in their own separate worlds, each watching the mirror like satisfied cats looking at their reflections in a pool. They sink to the floor, then with grave deliberation the boy surprisingly kisses the girl gently on the cheek. She raises her hand to touch the cheek reflectively, gives one last look at the mirror and departs the way she came. The boy watches her leave, stretches himself luxuriantly and takes up his untroubled contemplation.

The choreography is most wonderfully musical in a way the original Nijinsky could never have been. Not only does the dancing follow every shimmering curve of Debussy's score, but the impressionist mood — the heavy, somnolent, aphrodisiac mood of heat and haze — is breath-catchingly captured. Although the choreography gives every impression of having been fresh-minted for its purpose — indeed, on two or three occasions it has been described as the most original choreography seen in London for seasons — quite a lot of it could be seen in almost any class-room. Even the movements of the Faun, the works' most original physical aspect, owes something in passing, albeit perhaps an unconscious debt, to the Rimbaud-figure in Ashton's *Illuminations,* and some of the most effective moments in the ballet are those two or three Attic poses Robbins has taken so sensitively from Nijinsky.

But apart from the perfection of its craftsmanship — that lovingly dovetailed dance, music and décor — the work's greatness arises from the sensibility of the theme that craftsmanship has realised. It is, if you like, a ballet about dancers, the dancer's world of sweat and perfection, of attitudes and mirrors, of profound gestures and shallow thoughts. Objectively watched by Robbins' compassionate and innocent eye, a ripple of emotion disturbs the god-like mirror images. Unexplained and unexpected, it has a poetic ambiguity which our prosaic minds can fashion as we like.

It is a ballet about dancers, yes. But is our own world so different? Don't we look lovingly — and with less justification — at mirrors? Most of us are little floating islands of egoism desperately trying to make contact with our fellows. Well there was no desperation about *Afternoon of a Faun,* but it was about human contacts, about us.

This ballet was a revival from the repertory of New York City Ballet, and although it has never been produced previously in Britain, I saw the City Ballet production when the company was on one of its European tours. I feel that the earlier version was more effective than this present revival — partly because it is probably a work better seen in the repertory of City Ballet than in its present context, and partly because Wilma Curley proved no equal for Tanaquil LeClercq, the original nymph. There was an ethereal sexuality about LeClercq, which was in no way matched by the earthy vacuousness of Curley.

John Jones, a magnificent Negro dancer, was, on the other hand, superb as the Faun. He has the most wonderfully noble sculptured face and body, and in this, every movement was a fantastic mixture of animal grace and human dignity.

N.Y. Export, Op. Jazz

Choreography, Jerome Robbins; Music, Robert Prince; Décor, Ben Shahn; Costumes, Ben Shahn and Florence Klotz; Lighting, Jean Rosenthal.

SOMEWHERE I called this ballet *"West Side Story* without the story" but, of course, there is a lot more to it than that. *West Side Story* succeeded in shattering every rule in the musical's book, but it still remained a musical. It is light entertainment with a heavy touch, impressive, enjoyable, but still melodramatic and as corny as all get-out. It is a most wonderful musical but every time I see it I am thrilled and disappointed in about equal measure ; thrilled by its expertise, its vigour and imagination, disappointed by its hokum and slick romanticism.

Almost everything that is good in *West Side Story* is also to be found in *N.Y. Export, Op. Jazz,* but all its cheaper qualities have been drained away — it's the difference between the world of Ben Shahn and the world of Oliver Smith, the world of natural genius and the world of masterly talent.

Ostensibly *N.Y. Export* is a plotless ballet about shook-up kids in New York. It hits audiences all over the world with an explosive force not because it's a wonderfully exciting dance spectacle (which it is), and certainly not because we sobersided squares — middle-aged and balding — are able to "identify" ourselves with American teenagers, but because the ballet conveys the spirit not just of a specific generation but the whole age in which we live. The stylised world of these shook-up kids, with its fears and hopes, its conflicting anxieties towards conformity and individualism and its stress on rat-race pulse, this is the microcosm of our own jungle.

As in *Afternoon of a Faun* Robbins is at pains to establish a direct contact between audience and dancers. He accomplishes it here by having his dancers run on, singly and in groups, stop in their tracks and stare balefully at the audience. A few of them drop down to touch their "heath", their home-ground, then having apparently established their identity as a group, they first circle round in a flick-knife prowl, dancing in and out to some geometrical ritual, until they are suddenly thrown down in an explosive H-bomb of ecstasy.

The next scene is called "Statics" — possibly so-called because it represents the slow build-up of electric emotional potential in a gang. It is one of two specifically anecdotal episodes in the ballet. A group of five boys are kidding one another along, when a girl enters and provokes them. The electric tension builds up until the girl is raped.

The mood changes for "Improvisations" which presents the gang structure in its more social mood. Here the kids are just enjoying themselves having a ball. One intricate dance feat follows another, and the whole episode makes a curiously acute, and probably unconscious, comment on American behaviour patterns. Here you see the gang — the American desire for "togetherness" and shelter — you see the strictly conventionalised and ritualistic society, the dancers keeping up with the Joneses, then suddenly each one breaks away from the group to make his or her individual variation on the common theme. This to European eyes is that American Way of Life which makes all seem to want the same car in different colours and with differently shaped chrome fittings ; this is the personality cult in a rigid society.

There follows the despairingly eloquent "Passage for Two", a *pas de deux* about two lovers who try to find contact in a world of strangers. Tender and groping they explore their love, and part as sadly and as impassively as they met. How are we going to talk with one another, how to communicate? They walk off into a questionmark of surrounding darkness.

After this second and final anecdote, Robbins returns to the generalisations of the group in "Theme, Variations and Fugue". This finale is much more formal than what has gone before — it is all very grand, and even rather aristocratic. With it Robbins seems to express his basic, liberal hope for humanity.

For his choreography Robbins has gone to the American social dances, and twisted and modified them into a highly colloquial form of the classic vocabulary. The dominating influence is of course Balanchine (some people have been mysteriously murmuring something about Martha Graham — to say nothing of Isadora Duncan and Kurt Jooss ! — but you may just as well compare Bartók with Schönberg), and this influence is felt throughout, but particularly in places like the *concertante* passage of the last episode. There is nothing especially surprising in the choreography, which is the predictable product of the mind that gave us *Interplay, Age of Anxiety,* even *The Cage,* and even the unsuccessful *Pied Piper.* But how finely has that mind developed !

Robbins' choreography is here a river of invention in full spate, dance movements and images flow from him, all inextricably linked with the music and coming together in what I can only call circumstances of originality. He can persuade you that you have never seen a *glissade* before, he can present a stock expressionist cliché that seems almost startling in its rightness, or he can put a new off-beat into a classic step that will make you gasp. His technical secret is probably the most perfect musical ear, and a most compelling sense of dance dynamics. He can play with movement like some poets can play with words.

Robert Prince's music is in the symphonic-swing style, quite decently orchestrated, not at all unsuitable, yet still on something of lower plane than the work of the other col-

IMPROVISATIONS : The third movement of N.Y. Export, Opus Jazz, *which bears many similarities to what Robbins did for the musical* West Side Story. *Photo : Usis.*

laborators. It is difficult to see what other style of music Robbins could have used, although to judge from his programme pronouncements he seems to be under the impression he has used *jazz* — but if this is jazz then *In a Monastery Garden* is Beethoven. All that glitters is not Gould, but the gimcrack excitements of Prince's score are nearly as lacking in the true jazz spirit. It would be fascinating to see Robbins work with real jazz-men like the Modern Jazz Quartet or even other progressives like Brubeck, but the difficulty I suspect is that this choreography needs the big-beat of mainstream jazz which is not transferable to the orchestral pit. (I would, however, one day love to see the Robbins group experimenting with jazz-players ; and including a certain degree of improvisation in the dances, as naturally would be necessary.)

The dancers — cool and aloof — are quite splendid, working together as if suspended on a single heart-beat. At this distance of time I forget whether it was Walt Whitman or Isadora Duncan who had a vision of Young America dancing — but at any rate now I've seen it too.

The Concert

Choreography, Jerome Robbins; Music, Chopin; Décor, Saul Steinberg; Costumes, Irene Sharaff.

THIS zany, crazy ballet is another revival from the repertory of New York City Ballet, and by almost general consent is the funniest theatre-piece to hit Britain for years. The curious thing is that no one made much fuss about it when it was first produced in America — but then the Americans have such a strange sense of humour! Some of them I am told even laugh at *Punch*.

The Concert (grimly sub-titled *or the Perils of Everybody)* is pure and delicious fantasy. It starts with the company's pianist — Betty Walberg — sedate and business-like in glazed taffeta and ospreys, walking on to the stage and settling down at the piano to play — what else? — Chopin. One by one, each carrying his own chair, the audience assembles — here they all are, the girl who just *adores* music ; the woman who wants to be moved, but *moved* ; the shy, serious student ; the two girls who came in out of the rain to rustle their candy-wrappers ; the breakfast-eating, Brooks-Brothers type ; the cigar-champing, hen-pecked *Herald Tribune* reader ; and his culture-vulture wife. First it is discovered that everyone is sitting in the wrong seat and they all play a game of far from musical chairs, which leaves the shy boy out in the cold on the floor. Eventually fantasy takes hold of reality, and the ballet clicks into second gear as the stage audience's reveries take shape. Now the ballet becomes almost surrealist with the dotty logic of the Marx Brothers. Incident follows incident, joke treads on joke, as the ballet develops into an outrageous gallery of *New Yorker* cartoons.

There are jokes about ballet itself. The shy young man and the girl who adores music nearly dance a *pas de deux* together. She, all gush and exuberance, being nearly caught on all counts by her reticent and most reluctant partner, the climax coming when the worm turns, clonks the would-be ballerina on the head and, cave-man style, drags her off unconscious. Later there comes the most hilarious parody of Balanchine, performed in dead-pan anguish by six girls, who do nothing but make teeny little mistakes. This is an old joke, but a damn good old joke, and Robbins has had the sense to see that far from being weakened by repetition, the thing mounts up as one mistake follows another in nightmarish profusion.

There are also two Tom Lehrer sick-jokes. One — always double-taken by the audience — is to let a girl emerge from the most intertangled Balanchinian grouping in ballet history, still holding on to a severed hand. The other has the hen-pecked husband, with knife in his hand and murder in his heart, stealthily creep up to his hatefully complacent wife and furiously stab her in the back, again and again, but all to no avail. Looking at the knife with speculative disappointment he tries *hara-kiri,* which turns out supremely effective, and he leaves clutching his stomach in his death throes.

Then there is a wry little joke about hats. After repeated attempts a woman finds *the* hat she has spent her life looking for — she leaves the shop and immediately passes another woman wearing *her* hat. Even more wry, and sensitively touched with compassion, is a heart-breaking parable about umbrellas. Someone thinks its raining, and puts up her umbrella, one by one the whole company follow suit, walking around with a puzzled look of unlocated dismay, until they eventually close their umbrellas and face up to the sun.

The cigar-champing hero — straight out of Thurber — sees himself as leader of the Ruritanian Household Cavalry, and lays the maddest of Mazurkas at the feet of his beloved, only to be brought back to reality by his nagging wife. Nothing daunted, in the ballet's *finale,* when everyone has been transmogrified into butterflies, he tries again — and might this time even have succeeded if the pianist, tired of her recital, had not left the keyboard and gone after the recalcitrant audience with a giant butterfly net.

For pure farcical ingenuity it would be difficult to beat *The Concert.* Yet there is an underlying note of seriousness, perhaps sadness, in the ballet which I have not been able to hint at and yet which gives it a very individual flavour. As in all his recent ballets Robbins takes up the attitude of the detached observer, laying down his choreographic cards with the dead-pan air of a poker player. Yet behind this non-committal mask one can sense the warmth and humanity of the man. For all the brittleness of its wit, *The Concert* is a kindly, unmalicious ballet about nice people that you care about.

Robbins keeps the humour from flagging almost until the end, even though the *finale* is past the ballet's highspots and comes, especially at second viewing, as something of a let-down.

The choreography is simple and always apt, and the ballet gives the company a chance for characterisation they do not get in the rest of the repertory. Patricia Dunn and Jay Norman were joyously funny as the Husband and Wife (Michael Maule danced it in the London performances, without quite the same *panache),* while Barbara Milberg and Tommy Abbott as the gushing girl and shy boy were equally amusing.

But best of all was Muriel Bentley — that Robbins stalwart from the first cast of *Fancy Free* fifteen years ago, and who else has ever lost her handbag so well? — who in a company where everyone is supposed to be interchangeable, remained as uninterchanged as ever.

Clive Barnes.

DECOR

FOUR ballets, one with virtually no décor at all, and the first consideration is not so much what was used but *who* was used. In fact I would say that by far the most important contribution made by Ballets : U.S.A. to Ballet Design : U.S.A. was the fact that as the company was originally formed outside America it was able to use artists who do not belong to a designer's union. This may not on the face of it seem to be so very important, but as I, together with a great many other people, feel that there is a decided place for the easel painter, as opposed to the decorator or designer, in the theatre, then their exclusion from it means that something is seriously lacking in the United States.

Let me elaborate. On the other side of the Atlantic there is a very strong union, and to become a member a stiff examination has to be passed. This examination concerns itself with all kinds of theatre technicalities as well as knowing the history of dress, ornament and architecture to the extent of being able to place anything almost to the year. It is obvious that a great deal of mugging-up has to be done before such a test can be passed, and frankly. what painter, whose creative urge is such that most other factors of life have to go by the board, has time to bother with such things? Why waste months of precious creative time trying to memorise information that will probably never be needed when there are so many libraries and archives that can immediately be consulted when the right occasion presents itself? The result of all this is that the real painters are virtually barred from the American theatre because they cannot be bothered to go through all this rigmarole — and why on earth should they?

Since the days when Diaghilev brought the easel painter into the theatre, the European and even the world stage has been enriched in a manner hitherto unknown. In America, though there are of course notable exceptions, they have mainly fine craftsmen and decorators — the painter, the one person who can bring another creative genius equal to that of the composer and the choreographer, is missing. How sad this is because, as we recently saw at the Tate Gallery in the New American painting exhibition, they have some explosively exciting painters who might well bring some of their highly inflammatory sense of movement, form and colour to add to the greater glory of the American dance.

So, amongst all the other things that Robbins has brought to the dance theatre, the fact that he used the Spoleto festival, where his company was created, for bringing non-union artists to American ballet, seems to me to be an event of some moment. Now we have been able to see in the theatre the work of two artists, as eminent as they are varied, namely Ben Shahn and the sublime humorist Saul Steinberg.

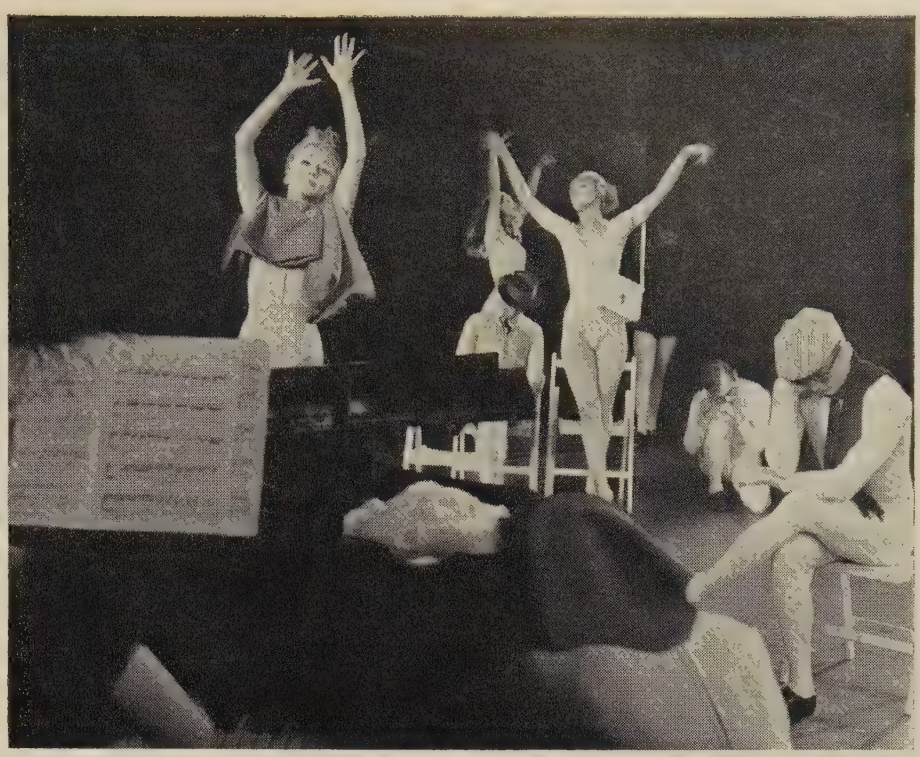
Having got all that off my chest, because I love artists and I hate to see them refused the frame of the proscenium arch, let us consider the four works that were shown, with such tremendous acclaim, to the London audience. With the opening work *Moves* we were back in the no-music school and we were also back in the school, now all too familiar with companies from across the Atlantic, of no-scenery. Well, not quite no-scenery because there were some illuminations from Nananne Porcher, the company's technical director and a pupil of Jean Rosenthal. I use the word "illuminations" deliberately because what she did was to illuminate the dancers and give them plasticity and another dimension rather than just light them. The surround consisted of those old black tabs which, in the past, have done so much to deaden anything that moved in front of them. So what does Porcher do? She never lets any drop of light spill on to what were probably tatty and moth-eaten black velvet drapes. It is impossible even to see where they meet the stage. Result : dancers coming on, moving

and disappearing into a limitless void. This is good, very good, and how much better would be all those dreary *divertissements* given in like surroundings if the same treatment was applied. But here I can imagine a howl coming up from those so-clever lighting experts working with most Anglo-Saxon companies — ". . . but you can't see the dancers' faces!" Fiddlesticks, as my Victorian aunts would say, of course you can see their faces if you use acting-areas and cross-lighting and a certain amount of front lighting. You can use all these things and still not hit the backcloth. As Robbins aims in this work at permitting the audience to respond solely to the action of the dance, then I would say that with this lighting and with the completely nondescript practice clothes of the dancers, he has got just what he asked for — so, incidentally, have we.

What Jean Rosenthal, with her décor and lighting, has done for *Afternoon of a Faun* is almost the complete antithesis of what Léon Bakst did for Nijinsky's *L'Aprés-Midi d'un Faun*. The old master, and a real master he unquestionably was, overloaded his setting with classical *post meridiem* rusticity and lushness — trees, waterfalls and boulders tumbled down his backcloth in such profusion that it was sometimes hard to discern even the protagonist recumbent on his rock. In its time and in its way this was right and anyway fauns, like animals, take on the protective colouring of their surroundings — at least all the ones I know seem to. When this new version of Mallarmé's idea to Debussy music is first seen through the white mists of a front-cloth the *faun de nos jours* is so violently contrasted to his surrounding that the shock immediately sets up a *frisson*. The white curtain rises to bring into sharper relief the chocolate torso of John Jones lying on a white stage cloth in a white transparent classroom.

I thought we had "had" white when all through the 'thirties every designer seemed to copy Oliver Messel's startling white bedroom in Cochran's production of Offenbach's *Helen* and the white "heaven" scene in Cochran's *1930 Revue*. It was beginning to get a bore because it was overdone, but now, nearly 30 years later, it comes back at us as still being the most effective colour on the stage when used as it is here. White floor, white walls bisected by a solid black *barre* running round the three sides and the only relief supplied by a deep blue cyclorama seen through a high door cut in one wall and two other cuts in the side walls representing looking-glasses — results in one of the most effective settings seen for many years. This classroom seems almost to be suspended in the upper air and the walls shimmer whenever the girl makes her entrance or exit. What is more, the lighting seems to react with the changing emotions of the two dancers as they see themselves reflected in the looking-glass imagined in the void of the proscenium arch, it reacts so subtly that the audience is unconscious that there has been any change.

It is one of those ballets in which certain aspects of certain elements have had a rendezvous with a wholly successful, and possibly unsuspected at the time, outcome. Rather like the combination of the Bach *C Minor Passacaglia* and a man's suicidal rendezvous in Petit's *Le Jeune Homme et la Mort*. I very much doubt if such a rendezvous could possibly be repeated with any success at all. Unfortunately I can see, emerging through the swirling mists in my crystal ball, endless theatrical manifestations trying to get away with the deceptive simplicity employed by Jean Rosenthal in *Afternoon of a Faun* — possibly because



THE CONCERT : *The pianist starts to play and gradually the members of the audience begin to express in movement their feelings for the music.* *Photo : Mike Davis.*

managements think that little money will be involved. Can't you just see it: three sisters yearning for Moscow, Julius Caesar being stabbed in the senate, Peer indulging in his endless Norwegian rambles — all in white sheets. The tragedy of this masterly simplicity is the vista it opens up when handled by minor masters or mistresses. For the moment though let us give praise, for Rosenthal has restored divine simplicity to the theatre — all washed and white, samite, mystic, wonderful.

If the first two works gave the feeling of suspension then the third, *N.Y. Export, Op. Jazz*, landed on the good-bad earth with a thud and the first of the non-union painters landed with it. Ben Shahn, for the London production, had designed a new front-cloth which though bright in a nineteen-thirtyish "Broadway Melody" way was rather crude in colour to my way of thinking. On the other hand it provided a dramatic contrast to the first setting upon which the curtain rose. This was mainly cream covered with calligraphic lines which could have been television aerials or could have been wind instruments in a jazz band — could, of course, have been both. The subject doesn't matter because what this backcloth did was to provide movement. True that there was plenty of movement in front of it later but this setting seemed to give a "something" which animated the dancers, and their movements were a reflection of it. The dancers appeared in black tights and windcheaters in the colours — pinks, greens, blues, mauves, oranges — that we had seen previously in the front cloth.

For the next movement, the scene changed to a rather lurid and turgid rooftop with strange chimney shapes forming suggestive silhouettes in the distance. Then in the third scene we were back on the familiar territory of walls and flat planes which could well have been *West Side Story* or any yard or any street anywhere. It was a pity, I thought, to break this sequence of Shahn scenes by merely using black tabs for the fourth scene. It would have been better to use the opening black and white cloth than this as I suddenly felt that there was something missing, some piece of scenery that had not been replaced after the plane disaster.

With the final movement Shahn drained his costumes of any colour — just black tights and white windcheaters — and poured it all into the 44 irregular oblong shapes looking like windows in a modern block, that were lowered in front of the original cloth. It was effective and I very much liked his idea of transmuting colour from front cloth to costumes and from costumes to back-cloth. His sense of shape and form was exciting throughout, though personally I would have liked a more subtle use of colour. But as the suggestions of theme were essentially youthful and basic it is probable that any subtlety would have given a sophistication ill-according with the general idea. Anyway, it was an honour to see the work of this fine artist in the theatre and he might remember that in this country he would not have to pass any stupid exams and we should be happy to see him grace our stages.

If there is any graphic artist in this world who fills my heart with laughter, and a laughter that becomes audible even when I see his work in solitary confinement, then that person is Steinberg. His gloriously and wickedly dotty automobiles, architecture, persons, cats, birds, and so forth have given me an hysterical pleasure equal to seeing Bea Lillie, the early Chaplin and the Marx Brothers. I don't know if the two cloths he designed for the last ballet, *The Concert*, are his first for the theatre — possibly owing to this union carry-on they might well be — but all I know is that the momentary glimpses we had of them make

me hope that he too can be lured across the Atlantic to design a revue. They showed two ends of a concert hall seen from the middle — one showing the backs of the audience looking at an empty stage and the other (only alas dropped in when the company were taking their calls at the end) of the front of the audience against a background of grand tiers and gallerys. The subject was pencilled in and some dabs of colour, mostly pink, splodged in here and there as well as some sequins just to show what a glittery place a concert hall is, or should be. It was quite tantalising to see these things for such a brief moment, but Robbins was possibly right to keep the main body of his ballet in a black surround. Anyway the white tights of the dancers, with various additions such as waistcoats and funny hats and apparently designed by Irene Sharaff, took on the air of pages from a humorous magazine. It was only the flimsy wings for the "Butterfly" finale that somehow seemed wrong. I adored the lady in a long black rustling dress with ospreys in her hair who played the piano.

The great thing about the designing of all the ballets was that it was absolutely right for what they were. It is true that no great demands were placed on the various designers and that at the end we were not left with the memory of a gallery of ravishing stage pictures, apart possibly from *Afternoon of a Faun,* but whereas ballet is a composite art form each and every design and lighting plot played its full part in that composition. This surely it what ballet design is all about.

Peter Williams.

CONCLUSIONS

IN her book *Dance to the Piper,* Agnes de Mille describes Massine, after the première of *Rodeo,* telling her : "You have done a characteristic ballet. . . . And in Europe I think it will have success." Without any doubt part of the success of Ballets : U.S.A. arose from it being an American export company, a group of strange exotic dancers from a surprisingly far-off civilisation. Another, perhaps sizeable, part of the acclaim arose from its association with the cachet-musical *West Side Story,* and yet another factor could well be its fantastically favourable press, which in turn was assisted by the fine efforts of the culture boys at the American Embassy and Robbins' own shrewdly written programme notes and statements. But none this fully explains the *furore.*

Robbins not only succeeded in capturing the usual, now dwindling, ballet audience, but much more importantly he attracted the intelligent general theatre audience, most of which had already had ballet like they had had measles. Why? How?

As a race we ballet-goers put up with a standard of production that would be found insupportable even by the far from stern yardstick of the ordinary British theatre. We accept bad lighting, atrocious orchestral playing, slipshod staging and a general lack of theatrical know-how, as if they represented an unfortunate, inescapable norm. The simple efficiency of Ballets : U.S.A. seemed novel by contrast.

More significantly the Robbins company dealt with the world around us in adult terms. Now nothing would be easier, or more unfair, to turn on British ballet and jeer at their failings to make contact with people, their ivory-tower mentality, and their frequent inability to grasp what is happening in the outside world. But let us be in no doubt, British ballet *can* do a Robbins when it wants to — unfortunately it seems very rarely to want to.

What I think would be fatal would be for Messrs. Cranko and MacMillan, fired with the message, to start making ballets about teddy-boys in Streatham. For the lesson of Robbins is to be found not in the subject matter of his ballets but in the method. There is nothing basically wrong with *Giselle* except our production of it (invite Lavrovsky to mount it and see the audience clamour), *Swan Lake* can be committed if it is in a version like the one Bourmeister produced for Moscow's Stanislavsky Theatre. And as for our modern ballets, plenty of them if properly staged could still attract a much wider audience than that currently trickling into Covent Garden. But what, I think, Robbins has shown is that people want ballets about people — whether the ballets are nominally concerned with Romantic myths or teenage delinquents, the audience demands integrity and involvement, both qualities which they found in different forms from the Bolshoi and Robbins, but which are not nearly so common in the home product.

Clive Barnes.

PRESS REACTION

6 stars — rave ; 5 stars — enthusiastic ; 4 stars — favourable ; 3 stars — lukewarm ; 2 stars — unfavourable ; 1 star — pan.

Edinburgh

Daily Express ****** ; *Daily Mail* **** ; *Daily Telegraph* ***** ; *Manchester Guardian* ***** ; *News Chronicle* **** ; *Observer* ****** ; *Sunday Times* ****** ; *The Times* ****.

London

Daily Express ****** ; *Daily Mail* ****** ; *Daily Telegraph* **** ; *Evening News* ****** ; *Evening Standard* ** ; *Financial Times* ****** ; *Manchester Guardian* ****** ; *News Chronicle* ****** ; *Observer* ****** ; *The Star* * ; *Sunday Times* ****** ; *The Times* ******.

THE CONCERT : *Left, Muriel Bentley tries on a hat which she discards for two others only to find that her final choice is also being worn by another woman. Right, a classical number for the* corps *in which one dancer always goes wrong. Photos : Mike Davis.*

La Belle Dame Sans Merci

First given by the Royal Ballet at the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, on September 2, 1959.

LA BELLE DAME: Costume design by Andrée Howard for the female protagonist.

Ballet in one act based on a poem by John Keats. Music by Alexander Goehr based on Chansons Mesurés **from a madrigal collection and** Le Printemps **(1600) by Claude le Jeune and Clément Jannequinn, Choreography, scenery and costumes by Andrée Howard. Lighting by William Bundy.**

CAST

A Knight ..... DONALD MACLEARY
La Belle Dame Sans Merci
GEORGINA PARKINSON
Princes and Knights...SIMON MOTTRAM, ADRIAN GRATER, ALAN BEALE, COLIN JONES, ROBERT MEAD, DAVID HOWARD, GORDON AITKEN, IAN HAMILTON.

AH, what can ail thee, wretched wight,
Alone and palely loitering;
The sedge is wither'd from the lake,
And no birds sing.

Ah, what can ail thee, wretched wight,
So haggard and so woe-begone?
The squirrel's granary is full,
And the harvest's done.

I see a lilly on thy brow,
With anguish moist and fever dew;
And on thy cheek a fading rose
Fast withereth too.

I met a lady in the meads
Full beautiful, a faery's child;
Her hair was long, her foot was light,
And her eyes were wild.

I set her on my pacing steed,
And nothing else saw all day long;
For sideways would she lean, and sing
A faery's song.

I made a garland for her head,
And bracelets too, and fragrant zone;
She look'd at me as she did love,
And made sweet moan.

She found me roots of relish sweet,
And honey wild, and manna dew;
And sure in language strange she said,
I love thee true.

She took me to her elfin grot,
And there she gaz'd and sighed deep,
And there I shut her wild sad eyes —
So kiss'd to sleep.

And there we slumber'd on the moss,
And there I dream'd, ah woe betide,
The latest dream I ever dream'd
On the cold hill side.

I saw pale kings, and princes too,
Pale warriors, death-pale were they all;
Who cry'd — "La belle Dame sans merci
Hath thee in thrall!"

I saw their starv'd lips in the gloam
With horrid warning gaped wide,
And I awoke, and found me here
On the cold hill side.

And this is why I sojourn here
Alone and palely loitering,
Though the sedge is wither'd from the lake,
And no birds sing.
(La Belle Dame Sans Merci by John Keats.)

STORY

"A KNIGHT upon his travels meets a beautiful lady — "a faery's child". Lulled to sleep by dreams of kings and princes who warn him that he is held by La Belle Dame sans Merci. He awakes to find himself "on the cold hill's side . . . Alone and palely loitering."

CHOREOGRAPHY

WHO killed John Keats? The time-honoured question comes round again when you look at Covent Garden's new ballet *La Belle Dame sans Merci*, for without any question someone has killed him, and not even his ghost palely loitered here.

I wonder what made Andrée Howard, or anyone else, think you could make a ballet out of this slightly over-rated lyric poem? I wonder even more why, after the work had been tried out by the ill-fated Edinburgh Festival Ballet last year, anyone could think that it was suitable for Covent Garden. This is the sort of folly that turns strong men away from ballet.

Poems are very rarely a fruitful source for ballet; a free visual paraphrase can sometimes evoke the poem's atmosphere, but not very often. What is a choreographer going to do with a phrase like "the sedge is wither'd from the lake, And no birds sing"? How can you convey the essence of this romantic fairy enchantress? How can you now capture the grotesque, robust fantasy of the doom-struck Keats?

The answer is you can't. All you can do is to present a simple *pas de deux* of boy meets girl, boy and girl neck in some convenient corner boldly marked "elfin grot", boy sees vision of a few "pale kings and princes" rather obviously suffering, and boy promptly looks disenchanted. The frightening literalism of narrative ballet is bound, I think, to make nonsense of the lyric poem.

In the past Andrée Howard has shown herself to be one of our most subtle artists in the portrayal of character — for an example just think of the three principals in *La Fête Etrange*. But what is she to make of the "lady without mercy" (what an abominable conception of Old French, Keats had!) and the "wretched wight"? They don't even come to life in the poem.

The choreography is bland, innocuous and unimaginative. It is carried out with the skilful fluency one would expect from a choreographer of Andrée Howard's great experience — nothing jars, but then nothing stirs. That it is unadventurous is of little moment, but unfortunately it is also unexpressive, and its combinations and permutations of such classical steps as the *arabesque*, repeated rather like a meaningless nursery jingle, and intermingled with statuesque artistic poses, conveys a mournful impression of colourless monotony.

THE KNIGHT: Costume design by Andrée Howard for principal male rôle.

It would not be a Howard ballet if it did not have its moments of beauty, and here and there the choreography achieved a dignified but eloquent rapture. Perhaps this gives the impression of an uneven ballet, yet, in fact, the opposite was only too true. It was the very evennness of physical pace and emotional temperature, the marked absence of contrast, conflict or climax, that made this such a wishy-washy work.

The failure of *La Belle Dame sans Merci* was doubly unfortunate, not only because the Royal Ballet needs more modern works in its repertory, but also because the very special sensitivity of Howard is still underrepresented in it. Looking back on her record it seems to me that Howard is probably at her best when she is working in collaboration with a librettist — *La Fête Etrange*, which was conceived with the assistance of Ronald Crichton, is perhaps the obvious example, but one also remembers her fruitful partnership with the late Hugh Stevenson. In view of this I personally feel that Covent Garden might do well to see that for her next ballet she has the opportunity of working in double harness with someone capable of stimulating her very individual gifts.

DANCING

ACCORDING to *The Times* (admittedly not always a completely reliable source on the subject of ballet) the rôle of La Belle Dame was originally intended for Alicia Markova. In the event it was created in Edinburgh by Yvonne Meyer. For the new

Covent Garden production the young Canadian dancer Lynn Seymour was at first selected for the part, but the foot injury which put her out of action for the season led to it being assigned to Georgina Parkinson. The part of the Knight, danced in Edinburgh by Milorad Miskovitch, was re-created around Donald MacLeary.

Not having seen the ballet in Edinburgh, I cannot compare the two casts north and south of the border, although it strikes me as not impossible that the two more experienced "French" dancers might have made rather more of the work than did the Royal Ballet's two brilliant youngsters.

Parkinson is a remarkably beautiful girl, although she does not project her personality quite as forcefully as she might. The choreography suited her well and she danced with a lissom grace and appealing simplicity. Like the ballet itself her interpretation was perhaps pitched in too persistent and pallid a key, but in fairness it was not a particularly rewarding rôle, and it would have been difficult to have done much more with it.

Donald MacLeary's part was if anything even less rewarding. The rôle was conceived more as the "wretched wight" found in Keats' revised version of the poem rather than the "Knight at arms" of the poem's first draft. The unfortunate MacLeary had to wander around the stage for interminable minutes carrying a sword as intractable as Sister Anna's banner. Once rid of this discouraging implement he partnered the faery's child with splendid assurance and grabbed what chances there were for dancing with the avidity of a nomad at an oasis. But the air of noble puzzlement he had to wear as a characterisation looked too near the truth to be funny.

It might be interesting to see both of these dancers in Ashton's *Rinaldo and Armida*, which would also compensate them somewhat for having had to make their Covent Garden débuts in created rôles in such an anaemic ballet.

The "pale kings, and princes too" performed their backcloth groupings and groupings with impassive fortitude.

Clive Barnes.

MUSIC

FOR the raw material of his first ballet score 27-year-old Alexander Goehr has drawn upon a collection of 16th century French madrigals (*chansons mesurées*) by Clément Jannequin and Claude le Jeune. Little is known of Jannequin's life (*c.* 1475-*c.* 1560), except that he made his name as the composer of numerous four-part chansons, many of which were descriptive of battles, hunts and so on — a sort of early programme music. He is thought to have been a disciple of Josquin des Prés. Le Jeune (1528-1600) was born in Valenciennes and lived mostly in Paris, probably as court composer to King Henry IV. His *musique mesurée* (music that followed the metrical rhythm of the words according to the rules of classical prosody) earned him a great reputation.

By going back to this source Goehr has found a modal music that can be made to evoke the legendary past. Moreover, its predominantly cool, grave character helps to establish the chill atmosphere of Keats's poem, complementing the stage picture of "the cold hill's side" where no birds sing.

Yet as music for a romantic ballet this score has serious shortcomings. The weeping and sighing of the wild-eyed enchantress, the ghostly manifestation of her previous victims, the knight's helpless infatuation and the catastrophe that befalls him are the very stuff of romantic poetry. They call for romantic, emotional music, something to fit the theme as, say, Chausson's *Poème* fits Tudor's *Lilac Garden*. Instead they are unhappily married to repetitive music that runs the gamut of emotions, as Dorothy Parker would say, from A to B. Monotony sets in long before the end.

The score used at Edinburgh has been inflated for Covent Garden, where a large orchestra is required with triple woodwind and a full complement of brass. Goehr has carried this out skilfully, maintaining spare melodic lines and a fairly clear texture, but the weight of tone is more than the madrigals can carry comfortably. I suspect that their best features have not survived

"PALE KINGS AND PRINCES TOO . . .": The Knight dreams that he is being warned that La Belle Dame has him in thrall. Georgina Parkinson, in the title rôle, is held aloft by the Kings and Princes whilst Donald MacLeary, left, sleeps.

Photo : Houston Rogers.

"HER HAIR WAS LONG, HER FOOT WAS LIGHT": Two studies of Georgina Parkinson as La Belle Dame, her first principal created rôle for the Royal Ballet. *Photos: Houston Rogers.*

the translation.

There are 11 numbers, some of them arrangements of madrigals and others original compositions based on fragments of these, as follows: 1. Fanfare; 2. "Chanson" (the Knight's dance, *andante maestoso*); 3. La Belle Dame; 4. Dialogue of the Knight and La Belle Dame; 5. Variazione dell a "Chanson" (the Knight's second solo, a slow dance with solo violin); 6. *Pas de deux* (a gentle, not to say mild movement with *cor anglais* prominent and strings in nine parts); 7. Scene in the Bower (effective use of flute, *cor anglais* and harp): 8. Intermezzo; 9. Nightmare (woodwind fragments and *tremolando* strings lead to a brassy climax); 10. Second *pas de deux*; 11. Knight's dance (repeat of No. 2, thereby bringing the music full circle like the poem but surely missing the dramatic point of the story); 12. *Ritornello.*

As to performance, the Covent Garden Orchestra gave a clean, clear, well-balanced account of the score under John Lanchbery, whose presence at the conductor's desk must have been a boon to the dancers.

Eric M. Mason.

DECOR

HOW wise is it for choreographers to design the settings and costumes for their own ballets? There are, of course, a great number of advantages. For instance it eliminates that interminable search for somebody who sees the work as you see it. It also means that you can fit the costumes to your conception of the movements or the movements to your conception of the costumes. It also means that you can design settings that show off your choreography and your costumes. This obviously saves, in one sense, a great deal of battling, harsh words and the ultimate feeling that the failure of the work was due to the stupid designer who overstepped the mark in an attempt at stealing the show.

On the other hand, the outside designer might well bring in some quality that is so important that it not only hides some of the choreographer's shortcomings but fuses with the choreography, so resulting in something far more worthwhile in the end. It also brings another brain to bear on the whole thing. I can think of many instances in the past when the designer carried the ballet — Petit's *Carmen* with its glorious Clavé settings is a case in point which immediately comes to mind; the brains of Bakst, Benois and Bérard often contributed to the choreography and general production.

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"AND THERE SHE GAZ'D AND SIGHED DEEP . . .": Georgina Parkinson and Donald MacLeary as La Belle Dame and the Knight. *Photo: Houston Rogers.*

ORIGINAL SKETCH: An early drawing by Picasso for the setting of the Three-Cornered Hat. *It closely resembles the setting eventually used.*

Ballet Perspectives: 14

The Three-Cornered Hat

(Part 2)

by CLIVE BARNES

Last month, Clive Barnes wrote about the episodes and incidents which led up to the creation of Massine's The Three-Cornered Hat. **This month, the creation, performances and performers of this famous ballet are considered.**

MASSINE started his rehearsals for the ballet in Spain, and they continued when the company made its post-war return to England on September 5, 1918. They were dancing in a variety bill at the Coliseum, giving two ballets a day, one for each performance. The season continued until March 29, 1919, when the company appeared for a fortnight in Manchester before starting rehearsals for its first "proper" post-war ballet season at the Alhambra, which was due to start at the end of April.

The first performance of *The Three-Cornered Hat* was scheduled just before the season ended at the end of July. Massine worked a lot with Sokolova on the rôle of the Miller's Wife, and in the article from *Ballet* already quoted, Sokolova says "Madame Karsavina arrived back from Russia when *The Three-Cornered Hat* was already finished. It was my pleasure to teach her the part of the Miller's Wife which had been arranged for me in her absence". This statement probably needs a little amplification as Karsavina actually arrived in England more than two months before the first performance of the ballet, and it is difficult to imagine that it would have been *completely* finished that far ahead of its première. Nevertheless Sokolova certainly had the part created on her in its early stages, and of course she later became one of its foremost interpreters. The first performance of the ballet took place on July 22, 1919, with Massine as the Miller, Karsavina as his Wife, Woizikowsky as the Corregidor and Idzikowsky as the Dandy.

The new work proved an instant success, and soon became one of the stand-bys of the Diaghilev repertory. Such a success was completely justified, for it is unquestionably one of the master-works of 20th-century ballet, a perfect act of collaboration, and one of the most important "character" ballets ever made.

Massine, who was 25 years old at the time, had already perfected in *The Good-Humoured Ladies* a style of grotesque choreography that fused dancing and mime into one unified idiom. There is hardly any dramatic mime, as for example Fokine would have understood it, to be found in *The Three-Cornered Hat*; even such gestures as the Miller swigging from the wine-skin at the beginning of his solo can be seen on reflection to be an integrated part of the dance. Throughout the whole ballet the characterisation and story arise from the choreography, naturally and unforced. Consider the Miller's tiny dance of triumph after he has drawn his caricature of the Corregidor on the wall, a few little jiggling steps, a swaying of the shoulders, an exultant wiggle of the eyebrows, and the whole episode becomes alive. This is the peak of descriptive dance, just as is the Miller assisting the Corregidor to get up from the ground after his first unfortunate encounter with the Miller's Wife; or the Corregidor's excited anticipatory springs as he thin-bloodedly goes about his amorous intrigue; or the Wife, with hands fluttering like lonely doves, lamenting the arrest of her husband; or — but examples could be given from here to doomsday.

Massine's set dances in this ballet have an astonishing inventive power. Conceived in the Spanish idiom they are emphatically not Spanish dances, although where the difference emerges is difficult to analyse. Admittedly part of this difference is one of mood — there is an attitude of improvisation in Spanish dancing which is neither found nor sought in Massine's choreography — but more than this difference in atmosphere or, perhaps better, temperature, there is the purely choreographic disparity between the two. Massine gives us an impression of Spanish dancing; consider the famous *Farucca*. Here Massine makes use of the *pirouette*, employing a classical preparation which would be unthinkable to a flamenco dancer, and the whole dance is subtly out of focus with the stylistic demands of flamenco dancing. One has only to see Luisillo or Antonio dancing to the same music to recognise the extent of Massine's licence, yet what he has created is an impression of the Spanish dance almost more flamenco than the flamenco.

Unquestionably the Miller's rôle is the best conceived in the ballet, yet the other principal parts are not left so far behind, and even in the dances for the *corps de ballet* Massine has achieved a sturdy choreographic structure, something of which remains — and this is an acid test — during the most perfunctory and flaccid of performances. Dramatically also the work with its well-spaced dance climaxes, and naturally evolving progression of the story, provides a superb example of narrative ballet construction.

No less successful than Massine are Falla and Picasso. The music underlines the story, supports the dancing and points the wit. One of Falla's most enduring compositions, it shows immense assurance, rather in the manner of the choreography, in its transposition of folk material for the resources of the modern orchestra.

Picasso's sun-baked house, with the bridge in the background, shows the bold economy of the master draughtsman, while the rich stylisation of his costumes are constantly arresting, yet the whole provides a homogeneous stage picture and contrives to suggest, without any false realism, the genuine village where people work and play, love and hate, live and die. The care with which Picasso approached his work is beautifully illustrated by Beaumont's story (in *The Diaghilev Ballet in London)* of the artist personally doing the make-up of each dancer before the first performance. Originally the ballet was graced by a very beautiful front curtain, which Diaghilev unfortunately had to sell during a penurious period in 1926.

The dancers of the first production have received unstinted praise from contemporary critics, although Beaumont has made the minor reservation on Karsavina's performance that she "was perhaps too elegant". Of the Diaghilev dancers Woizikowsky also achieved fame as the Miller, and Sokolova and Tchernicheva appeared frequently as the Miller's Wife. Before the war the ballet formed a basic part of the post-Diaghilev Ballets Russes, with Tamara Toumanova as the best-known interpreter of the Miller's Wife. During the war Massine revived the ballet for American Ballet Theatre, and in the post-war period he has produced it for many companies, including, perhaps most notably, the Royal Ballet in 1947 and the Royal Swedish Ballet in 1956.

The first performance of the Royal Ballet's revival took place at Covent Garden on February 6, 1947. It was the first appearance of Massine in London since the war, and the first occasion that a foreign choreo-

grapher had worked with our national ballet. Massine had come to England in 1946 to tour in a production of a musical based on the Caryl Brahms/S. J. Simon novel *A Bullet in the Ballet.* This, surprisingly, but in the long view providentially, folded up during its provincial tour before it reached London, so leaving Massine without any immediate plans. Ninette de Valois seized the opportunity of inviting him to Covent Garden to work with the Royal Ballet as guest choreographer and dancer, the first fruits of this being the Royal Ballet's productions of *The Three-Cornered Hat* and *La Boutique Fantasque.*

The original cast of this production included Massine himself, Margot Fonteyn, John Hart, Alexander Grant and, leading the *Jota,* Beryl Grey, Moira Shearer and Henry Legerton. The ballet proved a triumph, with Massine overnight subjugating a new generation of admirers. The electric personality had remained almost untouched by the years, and his actual dancing still retained its whiplash quality of dynamic power. "Miller Lucas was as ugly as the devil. He had been so all his life and now he was about 40 years old. None the less, God can have brought into the world few men more agreeable and sympathetic." Change Lucas for Massine and 40 for 50, and Alarcón's description of his Miller could stand as a fair impression of what the new audience thought about Massine.

Margot Fonteyn made an admirable Miller's Wife, yet like Karsavina she "was perhaps too elegant", and it was left to Violetta Elvin — then a newcomer almost straight from Soviet ballet — to reveal once more the full potentiality of the rôle. With her sinuous arm movements, magnificently noble carriage, and warm feminine gracefulness, she gave a performance which has not been equalled during the post-war period. The part has also been danced by Palma Nye, Beryl Grey, Anne Heaton, Valerie Taylor and Gerd Larsen, of whom probably Palma Nye and Anne Heaton were the most satisfactory.

FIRST POST-DIAGHILEV PRODUCTION

Left and above are the three principals during first years of the De Basil company which took over most of Diaghilev's repertory. Tamara Toumanova is the Miller's Wife, Leonide Massine is the Miller and David Lichine plays the Corregidor.

The first Corregidor for the Royal Ballet was John Hart in a fine study of lecherous decrepitude, which, good from the beginning, matured notably well. He set a standard which neither of his successors in the rôle, Leslie Edwards and Franklin White, has yet been able to equal. The smaller, yet important, part of the Dandy was first entrusted to the youthful Alexander Grant, who made it into one of his first notable portrayals. It has since been danced by Franklin White, Peter Clegg and Brian Shaw.

Not unexpectedly no one has proved a match for Massine's Miller, even though the veteran dancer was years older than any of his rivals. The nearest approach to the part was made by Harold Turner, who so precisely followed Massine in every quirk and nuance that his performance achieved the remarkable feat of being nearly indistinguishable from his master's. Of the other dancers who have taken the rôle (Michael Somes, Alexander Grant, Pirmin Trecu, Gilbert Vernon and David Blair) Grant and Trecu have been the most memorable, although both Blair and Vernon danced it extremely well. The ballet has now been out of the repertory for some three years or so, and its return is long overdue.

As a footnote it might be added that the Falla score has proved a perpetual challenge to the various troupes of Spanish dancers who have acquired such importance during the post-war years. Both Pilar Lopez in 1948 and Antonio in 1955 have given their own versions of the ballet, but neither production had any lasting merit, and both were unable to hold a candle to the Massine original. In 1939 Massine himself tried to repeat his success of *The Three-Cornered Hat* with *Capriccio Espagnol,* to the Rimsky-Korsakov music. It proved stubbornly unrepeatable.

STAR LINE-UP : The artists who had taken part in London's Festival Ballet Tenth Anniversary Gala line up to take their calls. In the distance, left, are Ronald Emblen and Vassilie Trunoff. Front row are Carla Fracci, Belinda Wright, John Gilpin, Yvette Chauviré and Alicia Markova. Behind them are Vladimir Skouratoff, Toni Lander, Marilyn Burr, Louis Godfrey, Jeannette Minty, André Prokovsky, Janet Overton, Jean-Pierre Alban and Diana Westerman. *Photo : Mike Davis.*

curtain up!

Antonio speaks out

ANTONIO, who stopped off in London for a few days on his return from a triumphantly successful South African tour, was adamant. He said that he will *never* return there again if he is permitted to play only for white audiences. There had, apparently, been quite a fuss when he was out there and demonstrations outside the theatre.

Much as I am against artists getting mixed up in political movements which are likely to deflect from their real work, in this case Antonio was perfectly right. Art such as he presents should be for all peoples regardless of race, creed and colour. I wonder very much whether the Royal Ballet, due to visit South Africa next year, will permit racial discrimination to prevent any Africans from seeing their performances? The company is surely of sufficient importance to make a stand in this respect — particularly since its dancers include representatives of so many Commonwealth races.

Fonteyn stops performance

THAT other great international name, Margot Fonteyn, was also very adamant — but in a different way to Antonio. On the invitation of the wife of Brazil's President, Fonteyn agreed to dance at a charity performance in Rio de Janeiro. Dame Margot is, of course, herself half-Brazilian, as her mother, Mrs. Hookham, is a native of that country. At the end of July, Fonteyn and Somes flew to Rio to dance in *Giselle*. The first act of the ballet had been going on some time and Fonteyn had just started her variation when she found that photographers and television cameras were in the wings in spite of the fact that she had forbidden anything of this kind back-stage. So what did she do? She just stopped dancing and refused to go on until the offenders had been sent away — presumably with Brazilian fleas in their ears. Fonteyn was absolutely right and I am glad to think that she has followed the example of Maria Callas who, at a recent concert in Madrid, refused to continue singing until the audience was seated. It is up to these great artists to stop the bad manners and behaviour all too prevalent in theatres today.

Bad luck dogs Dolin

FEW dancers can have had such a run of bad luck equal to what Dolin has suffered this year. A few months ago I told you about his jaundice and the loss of good friends. But the latest disaster might well affect his future career on the stage. It seems that when he was at his villa in Monte Carlo, for a short holiday between the recent Fesival Hall season and Festival Ballet's Scandinavian tour, a bath fell on his foot and broke several bones. How, you might well ask, could a bath fall on his foot? Well, he was having a modern bath put in his bathroom to replace the Roman one that was originally there ; he went to have a look to see how things were going when it happened. An agonising and, for a dancer, particularly serious accident which evokes all our sympathy.

Swan Song?

MOIRA SHEARER (the actress, sometime film star and one-time ballerina) was a surprising recent guest on, of all programmes, the BBC's TV Brains Trust. Among the interesting opinions she produced was the statement that she would not like to see any child of hers take up ballet. I seem to remember that Miss Shearer did quite well out of the ballet game herself, in fact it could be said that it was ballet that made her almost a household name. However, all was explained later on in the programme when she remarked that dancers were not so expressive as actors. Well, of course, as old Dr. Joad would never tire of pointing out : "It depends what you mean by a dancer," doesn't it?

Harlow from Holland

WHICH city has the most youthful population in Britain? The answer is the "new town" of Harlow in Essex, and if you can think of a better place in which to open a ballet school, I can't. Nor apparently can Leo Kersley and his wife Janet Sinclair, who recently returned to England after teaching for some years in Holland. The

new ballet school they have just opened in Harlow is already prospering, and I was glad to hear that as well as countless girls, Kersley has already got one boy pupil.

During the years between 1946 and 1950, Kersley was *premier danseur* of the Sadler's Wells Theatre Ballet and the virile example he then set did, without doubt, an incalculable amount of good to the young generation of British male dancers then emerging.

Ballet voices live on

THE art of ballet is one of the most difficult to preserve for posterity. Today things are better than they used to be because so many films of dance are being made. But Jupiter Recordings have just announced that, between the beginning of December and the first months of next year, they will be issuing a series of recorded talks by famous ballet personalities. These will include Beryl Grey on various aspects of ballet, and Marie Rambert, Tamara Karsavina and Dame Adeline Genée mainly reminiscing. Ivor Guest has supplied the sleeve notes.

Obviously these are not the sort of records that everyone will want to put on the gramophone and just play all the time, but imagine how interesting it will be to have a conversation on ballet between Karsavina and Rambert and Genée, the great star of the Empire Theatre, talking about her life. What would we not now give for similar recordings of a conversation between, say, Diaghilev and Fokine. More details of this important series will appear in the next issue.

Ready-made stories

JOHN CRANKO has often been criticised in the past for devising the stories of his own ballets — sometimes with justice, sometimes not. He is already forestalling criticism this autumn by going to established successes of the "legitimate" stage for the plots of both his new ballets. The difference between the two subjects should certainly prevent anyone from accusing him of narrow or restricted tastes. I wonder if it has ever been known in the theatre before for one man to be working simultaneously on a classical drama by Racine (Anouilh version) and a Victorian blood-curdling melodrama? His *Antigone* will have been seen at Covent Garden by the time these words are read ; his *Sweeney Todd* will be seen at the Memorial Theatre, Stratford-on-Avon, when the touring group of the Royal Ballet appears there in December.

Ballet Populaire

IT has always seemed to me that what French ballet needed was for somebody to give cohesion to the many talented dancers and choreographers outside the Paris Opéra organisation. So much effort is expended on an infinite number of small individual companies and concert groups which achieve only a spasmodic existence.

Many people will remember Jean Robin, who, for many years, managed Les Ballets des Champs-Elysées, and more recently became a director of the Théâtre des Champs-Elysées. Now I hear that he is hoping to form a permanent Popular National Ballet at his theatre. He says that this will take as its model the Théâtre Nationale Populaire of Jean Vilar, which has done so much to revitalise French drama. With his great experience with so many companies, Robin is just the person to bring this off. There will always be scope for small individual companies but if a permanent rival to the Opéra can be established it can only do good—to the Opéra more than anyone as providing continuous competition.

Another theatre in danger

THE Golders Green Hippodrome, one of the only two suburban theatres where it is possible to put in large ballet companies, is in danger of demolition. Its loss would be extremely serious as the theatres outside central London are getting fewer and fewer and at the present rate of demolition there will be no theatres in the suburbs or provinces in ten years' time.

While the Royal Ballet were recently at Golders Green, signatures were being collected for a petition to avoid the demolition of the theatre where Pavlova, the Diaghilev Ballet and almost every company of note has played. Many "foreigners" from different parts of London who had made the trip to Golders Green took the opportunity to add their names to the list.

I wonder though if the dancers who suffered from the steeply raked stage and antiquated lighting effects were quite as enthusiastic about saving the theatre as the audience were?

Guests at Home

THIS habit of artists becoming guest artists in their own companies is getting catching. First it was Margot Fonteyn and the Royal Ballet, now I hear that Liane Daydé is to hold the same position with the Paris Opéra for the next year. But one custom that it seems unlikely that the Royal Ballet will copy from the Paris Opéra is the suspension of artists. Michel Renault, for many years the Opéra's principal male dancer, was suspended as a disciplinary measure after his refusal to appear in the *Rose Adagio* in the *Sleeping Beauty divertissement.*

In out, in out

MOST of us have lost count of the number of times that John Taras has joined and left the International Ballet of the Marquis de Cuevas in his capacity of Ballet Master. When he is there the discipline of the company usually takes on fantastic strides for the better because he is probably one of the best Ballet Masters going around these days. After about two years, during which the company appeared in London dancing better than on any previous visit, Taras has left again. This time he has not only left the company but also returned to America — whether permanently or only on an extended visit is not at the moment certain. He has been replaced, in the company of the Marquis, by Bronislava Nijinska, whose association with the company has been equally erratic.

happy birthday to...

		November
Bryan Ashbridge	The Royal Ballet	25
Jocelyn Vollmar	San Francisco Ballet	25
Peter Wright		25
Patricia Cox	Teaching in Australia	26
Valerie Duke	London's Festival Ballet	27
Nicholas Magallanes	New York City Ballet	27
Philippe Perrottet	Sadler's Wells Opera Ballet	29
Doreen Draisey	Ballet Rambert	30
		December
Alicia Markova		1
Shirley Dixon	Ballet Rambert	1
Ady Addor	American Theatre Theatre	1
Philip Chatfield	In New Zealand	2
Harold Turner	Royal Ballet Organisation	2
Irene Siegfried	Ballet Rambert	2
Moyra Fraser	The Old Vic	3
Lupe Serrano	American Ballet Theatre	7
Grant Strate	Canadian National Ballet	7
Estella Nova	Borovansky Ballet	9
Miro Zolan	Royal Winnipeg Ballet	10
Joan Blakeney	The Royal Ballet	11
Kenneth MacMillan	Royal Ballet choreographer	11
Gayrie MacSween	Ballet Rambert	11
Shirley Kash	Canadian National Ballet	13
Nicholas Polajenko	De Cuevas International Ballet	15
Anna Truscott	Ballet Rambert	17
Annette Page	The Royal Ballet	18
Alan Carter	Choreographer in Holland	24
David Lichine	Choreographer in America	25

Dancer You Will Know

Photo : Houston Rogers

CHRISTINE BECKLEY

BORN in Stanmore, Middlesex, on March 16, 1939. Started to dance in 1944 with Miss Lucani, Wembley Park, going to the Phyllis Bedells School in 1946. Won R.A.D. Scholarship in 1948. Joined Royal Ballet School in 1951, and after making her stage début at Covent Garden as a student, she was taken into the Covent Garden Company in September, 1956. Appointed junior soloist in August of this year.
Creations : Principal dancer in La Valse. *Rôles : Queen of the Wilis* in Giselle ; *Prayer in* Coppélia ; *Centre* Pas de Six *and Leading Swan in* Swan Lake ; *Black Queen in* Checkmate ; *Red Girl in* Les Patineurs ; *Mandolin* Pas de Trois *in* La Fête Etrange.

ALTHOUGH Christine Beckley has only been in the Royal Ballet for three years she has already made a mark. Her first big solo rôle, Black Queen in *Checkmate,* came last year, a lucky break somewhat neutralised by coinciding with a De Cuevas first night and consequently only seen by a few people. In fact she has now built up quite an "unseen" repertory for herself, for this summer she went on tour to South Africa with Petrus Bosman's group and danced such rôles as the *Don Quixote Pas de Deux.*

She has good clean jumps, and a fine spaciousness of movement which has stood her in good stead as a Leading Swan and a coldly malignant Queen of the Wilis. She already has a certain authority which suggests a Lilac Fairy in the making, but it may well be that her real *métier* will prove to be either dramatic or even comedy parts. It was noticeable that in Meriel Evans's *Rumanische Volkstanze* for Sunday Ballet Club earlier this year, she showed a marked flair for comedy, which could well be exploited.

Ways of taking it down

DANCE NOTATION BOOKS
Reviewed by E. C. Mason

Classical from Russia

Alphabet of Movements of the Human Body, by V. I. Stepanov. Limited edition of 175 copies. (The Golden Head Press, Cambridge. 42*s.*)

WRITING on dance notation in 1760, Noverre complained that the art was very imperfect. "It indicates," he wrote in his *Lettres sur la Danse et les Ballets,* "with exactitude the movements of the feet only, and if it shows us the movements of the arms, it orders neither the positions nor the contours they should have. Again, it shows us neither the attitudes of the body nor its effacements, nor the oppositions of the head... I regard it as a useless art, because it can do nothing for the perfection of our own."

In 1891, a commission of the Imperial Ballet Company of St. Petersburg reported that a system of writing down ballets by means of musical signs first invented by one of the artists, Vladimir Stepanov, had been examined by a special commission and tested in practice. The report concluded: "Considering that up to the present no convenient means or system for the notation of ballets existed, the Commission is of the opinion that the new system fills the gap and will render valuable services to the art of choreography." Such illustrious signatures as those of Petipa, Ivanov, Johannsen and Gerdt appeared on this testimonial.

Stepanov's system is certainly practical. It was by it that the late Nicholas Sergueyev was able to reproduce *The Sleeping Beauty* and other Imperial ballets for Diaghilev and, more recently, for English companies. In *Theatre Street* too, Karsavina described how lessons in the system were given at the Imperial School.

This English edition has been most expertly translated from the French edition of 1892 by Raymond Lister. The book is, however, no more than a skeleton key showing the general principles and their application, and, as the translator himself suggests, one can see many possible refinements. Its sub-title is "A study in recording the movements of the human body by means of musical signs." Musical notes describe not only the duration and rhythm of movements, but also their character.

Three horizontal staves are used—the first of two lines for the head and torso, the middle stave of three lines for the arms, and the lower stave of four lines for the legs. Two forms of notes are written on the staves —in the conventional round form to indicate jumping and gestures in the air, and in an oblong form to show contact with the ground.

To indicate a movement of the right leg or arm a treble note is used, while to indicate a movement of the left leg or arm a base (or inverted note) is employed. Each stave has its clef governing the part of the body to which the stave belongs, giving the normal position and the principal movements for each part of the limb. For example, a forward movement of the left leg is written by a note on the third line (of the bottom stave); for the right by a note on the second line. Sideways movements are written by a note between the third and fourth lines for the left leg, and for the right between the first and second lines. Backward movements are written for the left leg by a note on the fourth line, and for the right by a note on the first line.

The forward, sideways and backward movements so far placed on the stave are termed first degree movements: that is the angle of movement is 45 degrees. For second degree movements at an angle of 90 degrees, three more notes in the same sequence of forward, sideways and backward movements are added on ledger lines above the stave for the right leg, and below the stave for the left leg.

If a knee movement is used this is again indicated in first, second of third degrees of bending by placing respectively across the tail of the note either, one, two, or three small horizontal lines. Movements of the arm are indicated along the same principle but, of course, placed on the middle stave which is for the arms.

There is also a vital anatomical element in the system. When this must be recorded the system becomes more complicated because it works on the principle of the extreme limits to which particular limbs can move without moving or displacing other parts of the body. For example, the angle of the leg movements, which are fixed at, say, a forward maximum of 76 degrees, may be enlarged if the movement is accompanied by an inclination of the pelvis.

The book is by no means always easy to follow. This is largely because an attempt has been made to adhere to the layout of the original. As the diagrams are all printed on overcrowded separate pages, one is constantly going backwards and forwards through the text in search of the relevant illustration. There also appear to be a number of mistakes, but these probably appeared in the 1892 French edition.

Nevertheless the material itself is fascinating and there are many original and ingenious ideas in the system. The publishers are to be praised for their enterprise in bringing out a translation of this long-overdue work.

Modern from Israel

Movement Notation, by Noa Eshkol and Abraham Wachmann. (Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 42*s.*)

FEW people have ever thought it profitable to discuss whether the collaboration (or rather the lack of it) between mathematicians and scientists on the one hand, and the creative and artistic intellectuals in our world on the other, is of any importance in the field of dance. This highly original and revolutionary approach to movement notation, however, could provide a jolt to many, especially choreographers, in that its inventors do make it clear that there is still a gap to be bridged in the scientific sense.

The authors emphasise that from the beginning they decided the system would be a movement notation and not a dance notation. The difference between the two conceptions is that the term "movement" includes in its meaning *all* the possibilities of the body. While movement is the name given to the material from which dance is composed, the dance is always the result of treating that material in a specific or preferential way.

The idea of recording ballets and dances was, therefore, a secondary thought while the system was being evolved, although, since then, the performance of notated works by Noa Eshkol's group in Israel has provided a satisfactory demonstration of the method in action. A system of notation, they claim, has not grown naturally from any of the dance styles, which are virtually closed units with no standard of comparison between them. The vocabulary of classical ballet means little or nothing to dancers of another styles: while "contraction and release", or "central and peripheral", terms characteristic of modern dance, are of no use to the ballet dancer.

Most dancers and choreographers think of notation as a device which will enable them to record what has already been created. Notation is thought of as a safeguard against imperfect memory. Eshkol and Wachmann are anxious that their system will provide a method of composition, a means of analysing movement scientifically by studying and defining its properties, then symbolising them for a process of creation.

The system is based on the fact that all human movement is circular. Thus, if one raises one's arm from the side until it reaches shoulder level, the arm with the shoulder as pivot will have traced an arc of 90 degrees. If the arm is now flexed so that the hand touches the shoulder and the elbow falls to the side, the upper arm has dropped through an arc of 90 degrees, while the lower arm has moved the same number of degrees in the opposite direction. It is the amount of travel which is plotted: not the position reached.

The staff is a horizontal one of 20 lines, read from left to right, and on it there is a place for each section of the body. There is no hierarchy of importance among the limbs: the feet and legs, for example, are given no special emphasis. Timing is indicated in vertical lines placed across the stave, much the same as in the Stepanov system.

One of the system's most interesting features is the extreme accuracy made possible by the use of a variable basic unit of measurement. To illustrate with the example above (that of raising the arm to shoulder level), one could take as a basic unit either, say, 15 or 5 degrees — in fact any number according to the accuracy required. In the first case the arm would have described six twenty-fourths of a circle: in the second case (5 degrees), eighteen seventy-seconds.

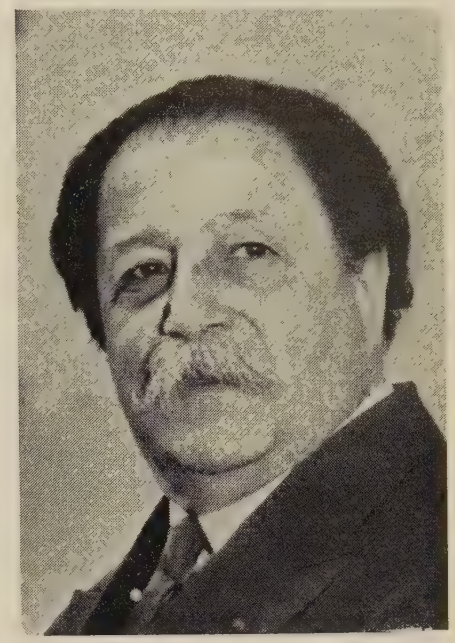
The movements are classified into three distinct types (1) Rotatory Movement, in which a limb moves about its longitudinal axis; (2) Plane Movement, in which the longitudinal axis of the moving limb describes a plane; and (3) Curved Movement, in which the longitudinal axis of the moving limb describes a curved surface.

Since the purpose of the notation is to describe changes within the human body — changes of relation between its parts — one fixed and unchanging commencing position is essential. This position, which serves as the starting point for the description of every change, is termed the Zero Position. It is a vertical standing posture, with legs straight, feet parallel, not turned out, weight of the body distributed equally on its base, and arms at the sides with palms towards the body.

Without physical demonstrations or charts and diagrams, it is impossible to give more than the sketchiest technical background. The work itself is well and clearly illustrated, but it can hardly be recommended to the majority of dancers, to most of whom abstract thinking does not come easily. It is primarily a work for the specialist, and it should be on the shelf of every person interested in dance notation. It could even be the dance notation of the future.

Two Diaghilev Conductors

NEW RECORDS
Reviewed by DAVID HUNT



PIERRE MONTEUX, who conducted the première of Daphnis and Chloë *in Paris in 1912, directs a complete performance of Ravel's score on a new Decca release, reviewed on this page.*

Ravel: *Daphnis et Chloé.* London Symphony Orchestra, Chorus of Royal Opera House, Covent Garden (Pierre Monteux). Decca Mono LXT 5536; Stereo SXL 2164. 12 in. 38*s.* 1½*d.*

DURING his time as musical director for the Diaghilev company, Pierre Monteux conducted the first performances — among other ballets — of *Petrushka, The Rite of Spring* and *Daphnis and Chloë.* His recent RCA recordings of the Stravinsky ballets were a little let down by the Paris Conservatoire's less-than-immaculate playing, but it was still reasonable to suppose that the intervening years had mellowed the great conductor's approach to both scores.

Now, at 84, he has recorded Ravel's masterpiece, and the youthful intensity and vigour of his handling of the ravishing score would be astonishing in a conductor half his age.

Ravel himself referred to the work as "a choreographic symphony in three parts"; and the point of this description becomes very clear when one listens to the complete score conducted as it is here by Monteux, in a vast single sweep that gives unity and continuity to a structure which — especially in the first part — can seem to fall in too readily with the episodic nature of the stage action.

It is a more full-blooded and warmly sensuous interpretation than Decca's earlier Ansermet version, the only previous complete recording (which, incidentally, has recently been transferred to the bargain-price Ace of Clubs series). The fuller, richer reproduction of the new recording can be only partly responsible for the LSO's playing sounding more seductive than that of the Suisse Romande. Ansermet's treatment has a delicately-etched poignance and evocative quality all its own. But the greater dynamism and dramatic fervour of Monteux's performance makes it the more compelling.

The Covent Garden Chorus's well-sung contribution is better integrated into the orchestral texture than is evidently possible under stage performing conditions. The range and clarity of the single-channel edition are truly superb, but the excellent spread and magical sense of perspective of the stereo version make it the obvious choice for those with the necessary equipment.

Tchaikovsky by Ansermet

Tchaikovsky: *The Sleeping Beauty.* Suisse Romande Orchestra (Ernest Ansermet). Decca Mono LXT 5532-4; Stereo SXL 2160-2. 3 12 in. 114*s.* 4½*d.*

THIS more or less complete *Sleeping Beauty* is rather more successful than Ansermet's *Nutcracker* and *Swan Lake,* which I reviewed last May, even though the Suisse Romande's playing once again falls below the high standard set by the Minneapolis Symphony under Dorati in their famous Mercury recordings of the three Tchaikovsky ballets.

The Swiss strings, with their thin and often roughish tone, are chiefly responsible for the performance failing to achieve the sumptuous, resplendent sound that is so essential for this richly-brocaded music. But if deficient in tonal allure and virtuoso brilliance, the playing sounds better rehearsed than was the case with the *Swan Lake* and *Nutcracker* sets, and in any case it is still a lot better than we usually hear in actual theatre performances.

Also, there is about Ansermet's direction a certain aristocratic distinction and poetical delicacy that reveals some parts of the score in an interesting new light and which helps to make up for the unexciting stretches.

The pulse tends to be sluggish in such things as the opening March and the Act III Polacca and Mazurka, and the famous conductor never really gives the impression that he is thrilled by the pomp and sheer magnificence of the music. However, its more restrained, courtly aspect is, on the other hand, beautifully brought out — the formal dances of Act II and the Act III Sarabande have an elegance all too often denied them, and which made me appreciate more than ever before Tchaikovsky's skill in re-creating a genuine 18th-century style and atmosphere.

The omitted sections are all relatively unfamiliar — in Act II, the Entr'acte and, despite its being listed on the label, the *Entr'acte Symphonique*; in Act III, the Sapphire Fairy's Variation and the *Entrée* section of the Aurora-Desiré *Pas de Deux.* There are also the usual Drigo abbreviations, authorised by Tchaikovsky for stage performances, in half a dozen other numbers.

Dorati's performance, with only two trifling cuts, can really be called complete, and is undoubtedly a finer performance, and although the recorded quality is beginning to sound a little dated, it can still hold its own with the single-channel version of the Ansermet. Decca's stereo edition is altogether warmer and more delicate than its mono counterpart, as well as having all the wonderful "presence" and additional clarity of detail that only stereophony can provide, and it marks a considerable advance, technically, on the Mercury.

Adam from Paris

Adam orch. Busser: *Giselle* — excerpts. Paris Conservatoire Orchestra (Jean Martinon). Decca Mono LXT 5515; Stereo SXL 2128. 12 in. 38*s.* 1½*d.* Paris Conservatoire Orchestra (Albert Wolff). RCA Mono RB 16086; Stereo SB 2018. 12 in. 38*s.* 1½*d.*

THE Decca group obviously feel that there is some special kind of authenticity to be gained from a French orchestra and conductor playing Adam's music (in a modern Frenchman's orchestration) — and indeed they say as much in the sleeve-note for the RCA disc.

Yet the Paris Conservatoire's playing in both of the new recordings is scarcely better than routine, and conveys precious little affection for the score, while the saxophoney vibrato of the horn playing, in particular, certainly does not evoke the authentic sound of Rhineland horn-calls.

The ballet, after all, was lovingly preserved by the Russians, who brought it back to France where the Romantic tradition had long since perished. When the Opéra decided in the 'twenties to stage a revival, Adam's score was held to be so poor that it was proposed that a new one be specially commissioned! Something of that patronising approach undoubtedly still lingers on.

To judge from Wolff's very curious tempi, the veteran conductor's acquaintance with the ballet must be slight indeed; but at least he might have paid closer attention to the tempo indications in the score — *allegro moderato* for Berthe's first entrance, for instance, which he takes absurdly slowly. Martinon's speeds are generally more orthodox, though the clip at which he rushes through the *Marche des Vignerons* would panic any *corps de ballet.*

Both performances are heavily abbreviated. Of the two Minkus interpolations, Martinon includes only Giselle's Act 1 solo; Wolff gives neither, and both conductors omit Burgmüller's Peasant *pas de deux.* An interesting point about the Decca is that Martinon begins Act II with a 21-bar passage never previously recorded and only ever played, I believe, in the Paris Opéra production (even the Bolshoi omit it). According to Adam's stage direction, it was the music in the original 1841 production to which Hilarion first came upon Giselle's grave.

The reproduction on both new discs, and especially the Decca in its stereo form, surpasses all earlier achievement. But on musical grounds the older Decca recording of a similar condensed version conducted by Blareau (LXT 5378) is preferable to either — that is, if you *must* have a potted version.

The two-disc HMV set of the virtually complete score used in the Bolshoi production, conducted by Yuri Fayer, remains definitive.

Cowardy Custard

Coward orch. Jacob: *London Morning.* London Philharmonic Orchestra (Geoffrey Corbett). Decca LW 5354. 12 in. 19*s.* 10½*d.*

TO listen to *London Morning* after *Daphnis and Chloë* and *The Sleeping Beauty* is to be brought back to earth with a vengeance! I can think of absolutely nothing to say in favour of this insipid Coward concoction, except that the recording has been well carried out and is there for those who want it.

What a pity that Gordon Jacob's great gifts as an orchestrator could not have been put to better purpose, and that Decca should have thought such a poor score worthy of attention.

Dance and Dancers . . . AT HOME

THE ROYAL BALLET at Covent Garden

Crime and passion

ALFRED RODRIGUES'S *Blood Wedding* is just not my kind of ballet. I was made gloomily aware of this once more when the ballet was given for the first time at Covent Garden on August 24. Its theme of a girl who, on her bridal night, flees to the arms of her lover, so bringing about the death of lover and husband both, is closely based on Lorca's play of the same name. But to me — and I think this may be a minority view — it is heavy-handed, turgid, melodramatic and un-Spanish; all things which the play definitely is not.

I suspect that in *Blood Wedding,* Rodrigues has gone all out for theatricality and dramatic impact, tried to get away from the effeteness and anaemia of so much contemporary ballet, and attempted, perhaps, to slosh the same popular jackpot once hit by Petit.

Yet the motives strike me as more worthwhile than the results, for the choreography is not much more than a flat mixture of Spanish pastiche and stylised gesture, interlarded with some most inappropriate classical dancing. By trying to adopt, as well as the play's narrative, also its symbolism, with the inclusion of two characters, the Moon and Death, Rodrigues rather injures its chances of being considered seriously as *verismo* drama, while at the same time he has still failed to find the visual equivalent of Lorca's poetic imagery. It is a poor, ill-conceived production, full of emptiness, giving the dancers a situation to act out with little or no assistance from the choreography.

On the credit side of the balance, however, must be placed not only Isabel Lambert's scenery and costumes (admittedly looking a shade tatty at Covent Garden) and Denis Apivor's relentlessly powerful score (showing, like the whole production, a certain influence of Alban Berg's *Wozzeck),* but also the chances it offers to its principals for a little uninhibited hair-tearing. To my mind the Bride is not one of Anne Heaton's best parts, nor was she one of its best interpreters. Her acting was always too neurotic, a study in maladjustment rather than passion. Donald Britton, on the other hand, made the very best out of Leonardo, full of earthy, primitive lust and yet with a sullen awareness of the destiny forcing him on to destruction. Equally impressive, especially at the second performance, was Michael Boulton's Bridegroom, a pent-up avenger of a man jealous of his honour to the extremity of death.

Yet despite these three, it was finally the impassive stillness of Margaret Hill's Mother that most clearly suggested Lorca's original drama, that conveyed most clearly the essential hopelessness of the poet's tragedy. I wonder what kind of bricks these four could have made had they had something more than straw to put towards their making.

The contrast between *Blood Wedding* and *Rinaldo and Armida* could hardly be greater. Ashton's ballet is a tiny understated masterpiece, and as one of the very few people who reviewed it as such when it was first produced, I now get quite a lot of pleasure from seeing so many of my colleagues trying to climb unobtrusively on to its bandwagon. (In case this sounds as though I am setting myself up as an oracle, let me quickly add that I giggled at Balanchine's *Night Shadow* when it was first produced here, and completely misunderstood Ashton's *Scènes de Ballet.)* But this simple *pas de deux* of the destructive power of love is exquisitely carried out, with a most marvellous economy of art. Like a direct, lyric poem, the ballet wastes nothing, and rises above the level set by its rather conventionally ordinary décor and music, to say something worth saying about people. The choreography is among Ashton's loveliest and sweetest inventions, and Armida must be among Beriosova's finest rôles. Always excellent in it, this season she has approached it with a seemingly fresh perception of its implications. Somes's Rinaldo — assisted by the revised ending which adds so much to the ballet's effectiveness — has markedly improved, and he has now made a well-rounded portrayal out of what once looked just like a mere partnering chore.

Of all Ashton's full-length ballets. *Sylvia* is the one which must take me as it finds me; it is unable to pull me into its mood, and, as a consequence, I find my enjoyment of it varies irrationally from performance to performance. The first *Sylvia* of the season on August 26 found me and left me in an unsympathetic frame of mind. I had to go before the last act, but did so without any great regret. And yet Nerina and Blair were dancing well enough, and everything appeared to be in order.

Yet surprisingly enough I thoroughly enjoyed the last *Sylvia* of the season on September 3, and I cannot pretend that it was any much better as a performance. Certainly it had the added interest of seeing the new partnership of Beriosova and MacLeary tackling a new ballet for the first time, and this may well have added to my pleasure. Donald MacLeary looked exceptionally well as Aminta, and although it was clear that he was a little under-rehearsed (only the previous night he had danced the lead in the première of the Andrée Howard ballet) he danced with extraordinary promise, even if his acting was overtentative. But his partnering was superb, and this makes an immense difference to Beriosova, who is enabled to dance with a newfound freedom of movement and expression. For the first time she was able to make her entrance in the *pas de deux* in the correct lift, instead of sliding on shamefacedly with her partner, and throughout MacLeary gave her better support than she has ever had before. Her initial response to this suggests that she may well be entering a completely fresh stage of her development as a dancer.

About Ronald Hynd's début as Orion, I was a shade less happy. Only John Hart has really made much of this part, and Hynd during his first performances seemed perhaps over-subtle, missing the broad, almost caricature brush-strokes of villainy that made Hart so successful. Nor did Sibley appear unduly happy about her new assignment as the Goat; the costume did not suit her any more than did the style of the choreography. Peter Clegg partnered her well, and also, together with Brian Shaw, gave a quite excellent account of the Slaves in Act 2. How very good these two are in this difficult dance!

C. B.

Heaton bows out

THE thunder which should alway accompany the first performance of any ballet, whether ultimately liked or loathed, was rather stolen from the London première of Andrée Howard's *La Belle Dame sans Merci* (reviewed in full elsewhere) by a rather moving occasion which took place during the evening's opening work — *The Rake's Progress.* It marked the farewell performance of Anne Heaton, playing the Betrayed Girl.

It is rather usual, when people retire from the stage, for writers to declare that never were they better than at their valedictory appearance. Hating as I do to string along with the rest, I must unoriginally pronounce that never have I seen Heaton better in this rôle nor have I seen the part of this fallen girl, who still gives her last mite to her ravisher, played better since Markova relinquished it in the mid-thirties. Heaton's attack was so clean, at moments even startling, and her pathos was so touching that I found I was moved in a way that rarely happens now to me in this raffish cautionary tale of moral disintegration and descent. While this unusual process was going on within me I was quite unaware of this sad occasion. Not until Heaton received such prolonged applause at the end, so many bouquets and solo curtain-calls, did the truth start to penetrate my numb skull. From the very beginning of Mr. Sadler's other company (to ever call it the "second company" engenders immediate transport to Coventry as far as the Royal Ballet organisation is concerned), Heaton has been the backbone, and almost every other bone, of the company. Even when she spent a few years with the Bow Street company it was really as a ballerina of the other company that we thought of her. Each time it looked as though the crown of true stardom was about to alight on her raven hair something happened, usually the leg complaint which finally finished her dancing career, and it was reft away from her again. Nevertheless her career has been one of great distinction and both her company and her audience will miss her possibly more than many other artists who have received far greater international acclaim.

Donald Britton was to have danced the Rake on this occasion but owing to a leg injury his place was taken, at the last moment, by Alexander Grant. While no complaint can be lodged against his dancing of the rôle, his interpretation leaves much to be desired. His natural virility makes him convincing enough in the ballet's opening moments, but it makes the end, when the Rake is supposed to be wasted with decay and disease, look rather ludicrous. It is still only Walter Gore, and later Henry Legerton, who have managed to instil all the bumptiousness and pathos that makes the character live and die as Hogarth intended and realised so wonderfully in his series of paintings.

Other notable performances came from Johaar Mosaval as a gadfly Dancing Master, Alexander Bennett as a suitably laced-up Fencing Master and Gerd Larsen as a sex-sodden beldam rolling off her scarlet stockings in the brothel scene.

The principal cast changes in Ashton's *Les Rendezvous,* which finished the evening, were Annette Page and Pirmin Trecu in the two leading rôles. I liked Page ; she had elegance and style and though less strong technically than Nerina, who created this part in the revival, she brought a sense of fun, which is what most of us will always remember about Markova when she originally created the part in the 'thirties. Trecu was not so good as he can be and what is more he had to compete with the recent memory of Shaw, but he is such an artist that even on his off

nights he can command the stage. The highlight is still the Park-Usher-Bosman *Pas de Trois* and the *corps de ballet*. **P. W.**

The new partnership

ON a sweltering hot afternoon way back in June, I was on the road somewhere between Cornwall and London ; at the same time Beriosova was dancing *Le Lac des Cygnes* with her new partner, Donald MacLeary. Writing about this performance in *Dance and Dancers,* Clive Barnes said : "I felt privileged to be at the birth of what I think could well become one of the most distinguished ballet partnerships of our time."

Owing to various commitments which took me flying about the globe, I had no chance of seeing this partnership until they danced in *Lac* together on September 9 at Covent Garden. Had Barnes exaggerated? By the end I was forced to admit that he most certainly had not. When MacLeary was first seen in this country in the full-length work he danced with Lynn Seymour, and much as I liked most of his work I thought his acting, particularly in the first act, on the weak side. As I said at the time this was quite understandable—for maturity in these sections we should have to wait possibly a long time. Though his first act is still far from perfect it has made quite remarkable progress. He is developing a more forceful personality and those soft ineffectual movements are gradually being erased and now his moments of standing with his arms folded in front of him are far fewer. A little more natural exuberance would still help to etch his characterisation. After all his mother admonishes him for the company he keeps and he should roister with the peasants a bit more, otherwise there seems little point in her displeasure. Heaven forbid that we should ever be subjected to the spectacle of bottom-slapping, but a little cheek-pinching and intimate behaviour would not come amiss — it would also underline the melancholy which steals over him later in the scene. MacLeary is gradually becoming the Almanack de Gotha Prince, now he should let a little democracy creep in.

Apart from the usual team of Mother May, Wolfgang Powell and Benno Rencher — almost as consistently good as the Moscow Arts Theatre — I noticed a couple of newcomers from the Itinerant (much better word than "Touring") Royal Ballet — Elizabeth Anderton and Robert Mead. Some years ago I saw Karsavina, in a lecture demonstration, explain the meaning of the first variation in the *Pas de Trois* — it's a lovely day, the Prince is handsome and it's his birthday, aren't we lucky to be having such a simply gorgeous time. For the first time ever I have now seen a dancer realise all that Karsavina told of and for that Anderton has gained my undying gratitude. She was accompanied by Brian Shaw, self-effacingly splendid as always, and Audrey Farriss, who came off rather third best. In the *pas de six* we had three boys — Christopher Gable, Robert Mead and Simon Mottram. All three were good but Mead was quite outstanding. He is tall, has a beautiful line and is a most elegant and clean technician.

With the second act came my first view of this new partnership. Even when a child of 13, Beriosova had all the grave authority of the perfect Odette. Since then her performances have fluctuated, mainly, I suspect, owing to the fact that her partners were fairly numerous and none except Somes had quite the correct chemical ingredients to form the right amalgam. Her height had a bit to do with it but not as much, we now realise, as we had originally suspected. She was a Princess-in-waiting, awaiting the Prince who would cause the full-flowering. It would seem that in MacLeary she has found her Prince. There is the beginnings of a *rapport* which has made up such partnerships as Markova and Dolin, Fonteyn and Somes, and, in a rather different way, Nerina and Blair. Of course this sense of belonging to each other will not fully develop until they are more used to dancing with each other ; that must come first and the rest follows — gradually. "Gradually" means "over a period of several years" so you must be patient.

What she does has been written about so much that there is no need to go on repeating oneself except now she is a steely sure technician and her legs have a controlled strength — none of that wondering if she'll make it or not any more. But this strength is surrounded, in the second and fourth acts, with an aura of poetic lyricism and the heart that beats is that of a woman even if, a few moments before, it was that of a swan.

With Soviet ballerinas I always have the feeling in these "Swan" acts that the arms are never still. It is as though they as yet are unused to being arms instead of wings. This results in every single movement merging into the next and forming a continuous poetic phrase. English dancers, in their striving for technical perfection, tend to chop their phrase in many sentences, which is one of the reasons we admire them but are rarely moved by them. Beriosova could well adopt more of this Soviet approach as she has the physical equipment.

MacLeary's Prince, in this act as in the first, is finding a surer line — still a little spongy but with far greater delineation than previously, and he is learning to eliminate mime movements that have no power to project. His partnering is intelligent and very splendid — no longer is there any feeling that Beriosova is even the fraction of an inch taller than any other ballerina.

But if the second act was all moonlit sorrow and frustration, the third act came as an explosion. From the moment that Odile enters, Prince MacLeary can forget about Romantic yearnings and give himself up to the sheer joy of dancing, which he does very spectacularly, culminating in a series of *pirouettes à la seconde,* in the coda, during which he occasionally punctuates them by bringing his arms up *en couronne.* His variation was also a nice exhibition of clean classicism with bravura overtones, but really it is very awkward with its series of *tours en l'air* going on to one knee, and I find it hard to believe that either Ivanov or Petipa could have dreamed up anything quite so aesthetically wrong — each bump on the floor is anticlimatic. Just as when he danced with Seymour in this act, there was a sense of relief as soon as he and Beriosova could give themselves up to the ecstasy of the "Black" *pas de deux.*

Beriosova has now got the hang of this act better than any of the Royal Ballet's ballerinas — past or present. Some may have had more spectacular technique, some may have had greater histrionic powers, but none of them has balanced the two so well as she.

A true daughter of Von Rothbart, she is imperious, seductive and with the evil in her showing ever so slightly on the front-of-house side. All this comes out in the three-cornered conversation between her, Von Rothbart and Prince Siegfried. In her variation she shows the same sort of *équilibre* that used to astound us when Rosella Hightower danced it — those slow, slow *pirouettes.* Yet here again, as with the male variation, everything needs untightening. A little relaxing of the Sergeyev reproduction would help all along the line. In the coda, her *fouettés* are now the allotted number and on place for those who care about such things but as far as I am concerned the important point was that they were given with artistry within the context of the ballet rather than sticking out like an acrobat's sore thumb. Well, if this is any indication of what a new partner can do to Beriosova and she to him then it is possible that the development of this team may well be the most fascinating spectacle the Royal Ballet will have to offer for the next few years.

As far as the rest of the performance went, the *corps de ballet* were wonderful throughout and so — hold your breath ! — were the *tempi.* If the orchestra played a few wrong notes and the brass was rather blarey from time to time that was not the fault of John Lanchbery, who is the most welcome visitor to the ballet conductor's podium since the death of Constant Lambert. **P. W.**

No integration for Coppélia

FOR the last few days of the season integration went overboard, and *that* part of the integrated company which happened to be doing the long provincial tour packed up their grips and left in preparation for the journey, leaving *that* part of the integrated company which happens to be resident at Covent Garden in sole charge.

Nadia Nerina and David Blair were in effervescent form in *Coppélia* on September 11, and the performance was notable for the Covent Garden début of Christine Beckley as Prayer — a smooth and eloquent performance. On the Saturday matinée of September 12, Antoinette Sibley, Graham Usher and Lambert Cox repeated the success of their earlier appearance in the School performance of the ballet, even though the very special atmosphere of that teen-age gala was naturally lacking. At the same performance there was another Prayer debutante in Vyvyan Lorrayne, who, in contrast to most of the Royal Ballet's young generation, showed more assured *port de bras* than neat footwork. Her feet looked as though they had a tendency to sickle, but she is clearly a promising dancer.

Quite frequently in the past the Royal Ballet has evinced a certain justified embarrassment at offering *Coppélia* unsupported as a full evening's entertainment, and during this season they gave it the backing of *Façade.* The John Armstrong backcloth had the appearance of having been the victim of a sea disaster, looking faded, creased and altogether—or nearly altogether — salvaged. Apart from this the ballet came up surprisingly bright.

The Dago is a rôle in which hardly anyone could go wrong, and Alexander Grant, its present incumbent, burlesques it wickedly in an almost successful attempt to out-Helpmann Helpmann. It is all good clean fun, but I wish we could have had the *Nocturne Peruvienne* which I understand he danced during that other part of the company's recent New Zealand tour.

Rosemary Lindsay is now a delight as the Debutante, more sophisticated than most but none the worse for that. There was a delicious *Thé Dansante* performance of the Fox Trot from Dorothea Zaymes, Hylda Zinkin, Leslie Edwards and Douglas Steuart, and I also liked Peter Clegg (hair parted down the centre, twenties' style) and John Sale in the Popular Song. Brenda Bolton and particularly Doreen Wells were charming, charming Milkmaids, and Merle Park contributed a pert and sweetly musical Polka.

C. B.

LONDON'S FESTIVAL BALLET at the Royal Festival Hall

Returns, happy and otherwise

DAVID LICHINE'S *Concerti,* which returned to Festival Ballet's repertory on August 11, has had some adventures costumewise, to use an unattractive but apt Americanism. First it was intended as a classroom sort of ballet in tights and leotards, then for a short space it went all Roman with dancers looking uncomfortably like unwanted supers for the *Ben Hur* film. After that it reverted to white practice costumes again and now Tom Lingwood, originally responsible for the Roman epoch, has come up with some black and white striped numbers. They make the dancers look like soubrettes in a Viennese operetta who have left a rather vital part of their clothing behind somewhere. In this particular case, first thoughts were obviously best because though too many of the practice-clothes types of ballet can become a bore just one of them in a repertory is a very good thing. Apart from anything else the Vivaldi music seems to demand costumes divorced of any fuss.

Lichine's choreography is not particularly distinguished and he is far too fond of imposing clever movements where the music cries out for classical purity, but it makes a work with which to open a programme and also for disciplining a company. And the company, who at the beginning of the season appeared to be needing some disciplining, arose to the occasion well.

The highlight of the programme was the return of Alicia Markova, who danced in the *pas de deux* originally created by her for the opera *William Tell* at Drury Lane two years ago, and also in the *Dying Swan.* Two years ago I thought the *pas de deux* was one of the most charming things that Markova had appeared in for years — I still do. Rossini was one of the most Romantic composers of the last century and his music makes a glove-like fit on the most Romantic of this century's ballerinas. Markova can be gay without being boisterous and charming without being coy. The secret being not in broad grins — Markova's smile is always only lightly pencilled in — but in the positioning of the neck and hands and the perfect placing of the feet. She uses her hands as punctuation, or rather interrogation, marks, and the extremities of her limbs seem to say, "Isn't it fun to dance". She can still give every dancer of our time a unique lesson in style. For those who think that what she does is now only a question of style might also take a lesson from her remarkable speed, which is used at the right moment and in the right way — not as a circus feat.

She was partnered by Vladimir Skouratoff, who did not fit so easily into the Romantic flavour of the work as did Borge Ralov, who originally danced it with Markova in the opera at Drury Lane. Nevertheless it was good to see this fine dancer back again in England and when he has got back his full dancing feet after his recent leg trouble he should make a splendid cavalier for Markova.

Later Markova discarded the Romantic skirt for the short classical tutu and danced, for the umpteenth time, Fokine's choreographic poem about a swan dying and floating down the river. Not even her great artistry can really reconcile me to this any more. It was made by Fokine for Pavlova — and nobody else. Out of respect for both these wonderful people it should now be dropped. I find it a very sad reflection on today's choreographers that no great ballerina has a solo that can be immortally associated with any one of them. In Markova's case, she has shown that she can choreograph an admirable *pas de deux* for herself, so I think she should get down to it and create an immortal solo too.

P. W.

A memorable Swan Lake

HOW often is it that one is involved in the situation in which a dancer appeals to one's most merciless eye at close range, yet a discerning acquaintance who sat some distance back says later that he felt she laboured away to no effect whatsoever? The cautionary tale is obvious. As even the most brilliant and subtle facial expression diminishes in effect the further away the spectator happens to be, the dancer's body must be attuned to maximum expression if a performance is to be equally well received by every part of the house.

The Paris Opéra, with its mere 2,300 seats, is notoriously unkind. When there some months back I noticed that however capable the dancers may have been or however hard they tried, none seemed able to really get across the vast spaces for any length of time. Yvette Chauviré, whom the Opéra captured young, therefore seemed in contrast an even greater phenomenon. She alone was able to bring a lump to the public throat.

Exactly the same thing happened at Festival Hall, where she triumphed over Festival Ballet's version of Act 2 of *Swan Lake* despite its menacing staleness. Her performance was visually very appealing, and, judging by its reception, she had succeeded in touching the British public's heart too.

Her approach was imaginative and unconventional in the extreme. Her arm movements were especially beautiful — expressively lyrical, heroic or elegiac depending on the action. She is an extremely refined dancer, who precisely adjusts intellectual means to very artistic ends. Every phrase and gesture has been carefully thought out. But as she has saturated herself in the rôle as she sees it, the end product is anything but studied or stilted. On this occasion there was never a movement out of harmony with her conception of Odette, although it may have irritated purists who insist that she should be more woman than swan in Act 2.

Her *développés en avant* were high and beautifully held. If one must find fault, it can be said that once or twice they were a little too high so that they took her off balance when she stepped into *arabesque.* Her travelled turns were fast and clean, but, one more quibble, lost something with her contrived finish of one beat for the pose and the final beat for the bravura flourish.

Skouratoff, whose gestures are certainly theatrical although melodramatic and often meaningless, seemed under-rehearsed. He partnered Chauviré ably in supported turns, but was short of strength for lifts. I was disappointed that he was deprived of a *variation.* A sensible feature of the production was that the mime had been pared down to the absolute minimum, making the act self-contained in itself; virtually a completely danced *ballet blanc.*

On the same night *Prince Igor* was given an excellent performance, fired off by Trunoff, now almost back in his old form, and Anita Landa. Janet Overton, who seems to have forgotten that she is a captive princess, is now giving a rather coarse and unnecessarily seductive interpretation. In *Variations for Four,* only Gilpin was impressive. It is a pity that Prokovsky makes no attempt to improve his arms, which, apart from the thumbs, have fallen entirely into disuse. The carriage of his shoulders and general bearing from the waist upwards remind one of King Kong. **E. C. M.**

Chauviré shows-off

ON August 25, Gsovsky's *Grand Pas Classique* was introduced into the repertory danced by Chauviré and Gilpin. This Chauviré party-piece to Auber music shows all of the ballerina's wit and sophistication, and she gave it a thoroughly civilised performance. I love seeing Chauviré and, for that matter, Vyroubova, in this kind of show-off mood, for they carry off their fireworks with such a delightful air of self-deprecating good humour. Gilpin on this occasion looked sadly out of form. His partnering teetered unsteadily between the adequate and the deplorable, and his dancing had little of its usual élan. **C. B.**

Tenth birthday party

THE word "Gala" when used in connection with ballet in Britain has taken on a meaning far different from the jolly festive junketings that the dictionary suggests. Both the Royal Ballet and Festival Ballet have been responsible for what seems like an interminable vista of dreary occasions whose "special" nature has mercifully been lost and forgotten in our appraisal of their "regular" performances. Gala now means slapped together *divertissements,* generally low standard of performance, high price of seats and a dressed-up audience who, by the end, wonder why the hell they went to all that trouble. The one thing that Ballet Rambert has, mercifully, been able to afford is *not* to have a Gala.

I am afraid that Festival's Tenth Anniversary Gala on September 10 lived up to the true meaning of the word as I have now come to see it. Neither Lichine's *Concerti,* which opened the programme, nor Paddy Stone's *Octetto,* which closed it, are suitable to the occasion, for they don't show the company as a whole and they certainly don't represent ten years of hard labour. There is nothing for me to add to *Concerti* that I have not already said earlier on this page. The company thought fit to add some new costumes and scenery, also by Tom Lingwood, to *Octetto.* They are neither better nor worse than the old ones so it seems rather a waste of money particularly when the company pleads poverty all the time. The ballet appears to have changed so much that I doubt whether the choreographer would recognise it. Stone's own particular slick style has been blurred out of recognition. Anyway it is not strong enough choreographically for only eight people — only the world's greatest masters can create plotless works for less than ten people. Not even Gilpin's Cha-cha-cha does much now to form any sort of apex to the work so the whole thing jerks along in much the same key to, apparently, an assortment of Latin-American rhythms.

Sandwiched between all this was the usual rag-bag of bits and pieces and not even Lander's ballet, *Vita Eterna* (reviewed by Clive Barnes below) could be considered outside this category. The rest of the pickings included the return of Belinda Wright, partnered by Gilpin, in the *Harlequinade pas de deux.* To see this charming dancer back again on the Festival Hall stage made up in good measure for some of the other goings-on. In her years away she has lost none of her innate sense of coquetry nor her darting technique. It is sad to think that this girl, the nearest thing to a true *soubrette* that Britain ever had, should not be dancing permanently amongst us. Both she and Gilpin brought the house down and scored the most genuine success of the evening.

Yet another *pas de deux,* this one new to England, and John Gilpin danced with Carla Fracci in Cranko's *Piéce d'Occasion* to some Delibes music from *La Source.* It is hard to know what "Occasion" it was intended for as it was one of those Oriental-classical numbers — possibly a Middle Eastern Oil Conference. It was really run-of-the-mill classical and, apart from some lavish and rather pretty pseudo-Oriental costumes designed by Carl Toms, the fact that the dancers turned their feet up from time to time was the only concession to territory lying east of Suez. It was presumably intended as a joke but neither dancer had got into the swing of it properly and some extremely awkward lifts never really came off. Neither is right for this kind of funny stuff and I should imagine that it was better when given by Merle Park and Gary Burne, for whom it was originally created. Both dancers were seen to better advantage in other things during the evening — Gilpin in *Harlequinade,* in which he finished his variation with the slow ease of the complete master; Fracci as her eminent fellow country-woman of another century, Fanny Cerrito.

The other dancers in *The Pas de Quatre* were Markova, lovely and ethereal as Taglioni, Chauviré in a variation as Grisi which showed none of her splendid artistry, and Marilyn Burr as Grahn, who seemed intent on burlesquing the whole thing even to the extent of wearing a top-heavy headdress. But it was Fracci who stole the show. It seemed a pity that these famous artists could not have been shown in something that showed them up as what they are rather than doing imitations of ballerinas of another era.

In the middle of all this was planted — very literally — Harald Lander's *Vita Eterna,* which was the nearest thing to a creation that the evening could provide.

P. W.

PIECE D'OCCASION: John Gilpin and Carla Fracci in the pas de deux, *originally created by John Cranko for Gary Burne and Merle Park for a South African concert tour, which was re-created for Festival's 10th Anniversary gala. Photo: Mike Davis.*

Vita Eterna

First given by London's Festival Ballet at the Royal Festival Hall on September 10, 1959. Choreography, Harald Lander; Music, Dvorák; Décor and Costumes, Georges Wakhevitch.

CAST

TONI LANDER
VLADIMIR SKOURATOFF
ANDRE PROKOVSKY
VASSILIE TRUNOFF
JEAN-PIERRE ALBAN
RONALD EMBLEN MAX NATIEZ

"The meeting of a young woman and a group of young men: portrayal of all the different aspects of Man. This is Woman's eternal dilemma in her choice of a mate . . ."

PRESUMABLY this new Harald Lander ballet was in place of David Lichine's originally announced *Vision of Chopin,* which for one reason or the other did not materialise during Festival Ballet's London season, although I understand it made a brief visitation during the company's earlier season in Barcelona.

If the title of Lander's ballet is meant to bear any relationship to its expectations of life, I cannot help thinking that it is over-optimistic. It is as difficult to be serious about a ballet which is obviously so trivial, as it is to be kind about a work which is apparently so pretentious.

What these merry and not so merry peasants, performing folk-coloured classical steps to Dvorák's hackneyed *Slavonic Dances,* had to do with "Women's eternal dilemma" was at no time made apparent. Everyone danced with a great deal of misdirected energy, and Toni Lander produced some sadly wasted charm.

Yet the abiding impression was dreary to a degree, and was in no way alleviated by Wakhevitch's backcloth, seemingly depicting a muddy road after a severe thunderstorm, and his toy-town peasant costumes.

I sometimes get the vague impression that the management of Festival Ballet, and many of its more fervent admirers, think that egg-headed critics like myself have been unnecessarily harsh on the company's creative activities. But the sad fact, as I and my like-minded colleagues see it, is that after ten years of intensive work Festival Ballet has emerged with no creations more solid than a few worthy revivals, such as Jack Carter's *Witch Boy* and Lander's *Etudes,* to its credit. Looked at from *our* perhaps jaundiced view it appears that Festival Ballet's artistic management has either been fantastically unlucky or, to say the least, just a little foolish. One knows all about shortage of money, and the comparative poverty of a Rambert we can all understand and respect, but it must be pointed out that it costs no more to mount a good ballet than a bad one. In fact good ballets are sometimes an economy, because they often last longer in the repertory. Furthermore, artistic integrity, so I am told, costs nothing at all.

C. B.

THE ROYAL BALLET

at The Hippodrome, Golders Green

Quart in a pint-size pot

ON September 18 the larger Royal Ballet company, temporarily exiled from Covent Garden by the annual Wagnerian orgy, gave a programme at Golder's Green Hippodrome worth travelling many more miles to see.

In *Les Rendezvous,* Merle Park danced the leading rôle for the first time. Without equalling the easy virtuosity of Nerina (who could?) she danced the solo with a fluency that belied its difficulties, throwing off the fast turns with deceptive ease. In the *adagio* she was aptly romantic, and even at this first attempt she came within an ace of capturing the distinctive lilt of the arms which is the key-signature of the part. I could have wished for a shade more elevation in the finale, but her sunny charm throughout the ballet was a joy to see.

Park's usual place in the *pas de trois* was taken with gay confidence and sweet good humour by Doreen Wells. Also new to the *pas de trois* was Douglas Steuart, whose unforced competence rarely gets the limelight but proved fully equal to this occasion. Inexplicably, the ballet was given with the enlarged cast introduced for Covent Garden; the *corps de ballet* in consequence looked ridiculously cramped.

La Fête Etrange also had a new protagonist. Antoinette Sibley danced the Bride with all the freshness, the radiance and the beautifully controlled but arrestingly personal line she has led us to expect. But this rôle demands also the ability to express the emotions of a girl plunged from unthinking happiness into complete desolation. I have met several people who found themselves deeply moved by Sibley's performance, but I must in honesty record that, with the best will in the world, I could see only puzzlement in her expression when I looked for despair, and pique where I expected anguish. Perhaps it is a good thing if Sibley having sailed so easily through one classical solo after another, has now found herself forced to grapple with a part making more exhausting demands than she can at once meet.

Richard Farley, as the Country Boy, danced and partnered more confidently than

at his early performances, but he pitches his characterisation too much on one key. The air of uncomprehending sadness which he adopts is never inappropriate, but would be more telling if he varied it with the shifting emphasis of the ballet's action.

As it was, Derek Rencher dominated the ballet with a most sympathetic interpretation of the Bridegroom. In the first *pas de trois,* Petrus Bosman danced with a lyrical quality of which his other parts had given no hint. The harsh lighting and harsher orchestral playing gave no help at all.

The programme ended with the kind of *grand divertissement* which the company normally reserves for gala occasions. The *Florestan pas de trois* got it off to a capable but uninspired start. Debra Wayne, dancing it for the first time, was a trifle stiff in her solo, and Farley, who has danced it only once before, failed to travel far enough in his *grands jetés.* After that, things livened up once more. Sibley and Shaw were in top form in the *Bluebird pas de deux,* and the *Rose Adagio* showed a very assured Beriosova. Two newcomers among her four princes, Rencher (first prince) and Keith Rosson, gave strong support in spite of manifest nervousness.

Between these familiar extracts from *The Sleeping Beauty* were sandwiched four party pieces. *Tritsch-Tratsch,* as at the gala last spring, was given with immense gusto by Peter Clegg and William Wilson as the two rollicking sailors and Doreen Wells, all wide-eyed and saucy innocence, as the maiden who gives them their come-uppance.

Pirmin Trecu bounced blithely through his once familiar *Jota* with a zestful and attractive new partner, Hylda Zinkin. MacMillan's *Valse Eccentrique,* first given at the "Hungarian" gala in 1956, was revived with Brenda Bolton, Alexander Grant and Stanley Holden all hilariously straightfaced as they wound themselves into knots or sketched athletic and gymnastic exercises in their *fin-de-siècle* bathing suits.

The remaining item was the first performance by the Royal Ballet of the *Pièce d'Occasion* created by Cranko for Merle Park and Gary Burne to some of Delibes' music for *La Source.* They first danced the *pas de deux* in Rhodesia this summer ; later Cranko added solos for them but the complete work was first given, in a slightly revised version, by Carla Fracci and John Gilpin at Festival Ballet's latest gala.

Where Fracci was blandly sweet, Park is intently solemn ; both danced the solo so prettily that I should be hard put to it to choose between them. The many jumps of the male solo suit Burne better than Gilpin, and he has dropped the silly mannerisms which gave his work for a time a sadly epicene air.

In the *pas de deux,* Park's crisp turns and sharply etched line made even the mock-Oriental facetiousness of the choreography (all bowing and scraping and upturned toes) look elegant, and the high lifts were the most sensational I have seen since the Bolshoi, in spite of one near-disaster caused by the steep rake of the stage. If Park and Burne don't bring the house down with this piece at the next Covent Garden gala, I think I really *will* eat my hat.

John Percival

Suburban Pineapples

CRANKO'S *Pineapple Poll* has finally been integrated. After eight years with the Theatre Ballet and its successor, the peregrinating wing of the Royal Ballet, on September 21 at Golders Green it was taken into the repertory of the more-or-less resident Covent Garden company.

The work wears astonishingly well and is as robust and full-bodied as a not quite best vintage Massine. Osbert Lancaster's original décor has been reproduced as racily as ever, even though the cut of the costumes (and this is becoming a perennial complaint against Covent Garden, rather like the orchestra) is far from perfect. Someone — presumably Cranko himself — has revived the choreography with great care, but it was noticeable that no attempt had been made to stem the tide of vulgarisation which in recent years has threatened to engulf it. As a simple example of this I might instance the procession of *en travestie* "sailors" embarking on to the "Hot Cross Bun". This whole sequence, and many others, has become much broader than the original, and it seems a pity that Cranko did not use this new production to call a halt to the apparently ever-increasing slap-stick.

By and large this company, as yet, do not give the ballet with the same gusto as their predecessors. The boys are probably better than their "wives, sweethearts and etcs.", although Able-Seaman Lambert Cox ought to be told that naval ratings do *not,* even on the most undisciplined ships, wear moustaches. It is, however, worth noting that in the *finale* Bryan Lawrence became the first British dancer ever to perform on stage a consecutive series of three *double tours* without preparation.

The cast at this first performance (Grant, Park and Holden) were reviewed last month after they had danced it with the second company at Covent Garden. The only newcomers, Brenda Taylor as Blanche and Gerd Larsen as Mrs. Dimple, were moderately successful.

Later, while the company was at the Streatham Hill Theatre, I saw Doreen Wells as Poll and Ray Powell as Jasper. Wells made only a tentative beginning yet was quite amusing in the shipboard scene. Ray Powell's Jasper proved a neatly calculated piece of acting which will improve when it loses its rather too apparent air of contrivance. Probably the best of the newcomers was Rosemary Lindsey as Mrs. Dimple — funnier than anyone I can recall — while Shirley Grahame made a fair stab at Blanche.

C. B.

The rest of the Royal Ballet's Suburban season will be reviewed next month.

Dance and Dancers . . . . . ABROAD

WHILST New York has been booming with dance activity — a four-week season by the New York City Ballet, the return of Roberto Iglesias and his company, and the first visit by the Bayanihan, the Philippine National Dance Company — the *new* news has been dance in two other forms that is of international significance. One of these is Martha Graham's *Appalachian Spring* in a filmed version that is just now in the process of world distribution. The other is the publication of Doris Humphrey's *The Art of Making Dances,* which, whether one agrees with it completely or not, is perhaps the most important written work on approaches to choreography that has been produced in this century.

"Appalachian Spring"

THIS masterwork by Martha Graham, shown in London in 1954, and hailed then in *Dance and Dancers* (May 1954 issue) as her "song of the earth", is indeed one of the most glorious works in the repertoire of the entire American dance field. Its present film version, commissioned by the educational television station, WQED, in Pittsburgh, Miss Graham's birthplace, captures all the poignancy, ecstasy and tranquillity of the original and so, like its forerunner, *A Dancer's World,* it is important both as a re-created experience and as an historic document.

Like the stage original, this film runs twenty-nine minutes, the exact time that it takes to play Aaron Copland's Pulitzer prize-winning score. What emerges is the nearest possible approximation of the stage performance with only close-ups to detract from the overall impact of the continuous and total use of the full stage. In some instances, this minimises the complete dramatic effect ; in others it heightens it. On the whole, however, it is probably the truest film work that we have yet seen of an already created dance work.

One of the loveliest of the musical themes that runs through this score is composer Aaron Copland's adaptation of the old Shaker tune, "The Gift to be Simple". This has the dignity, the discipline and the elegance of this early American religious cult that believed that they literally shook off the evils of sin and desire in their dancing. The chief idea of this work, of course, is the conflict between the Puritanical belief as represented here by the revivalist and his followers in contrast to the presupposed marital union between the wife and the husbandman. This is strikingly realised in the film and the entire Graham company brings it to glowing life. Martha Graham is superb as the wife and she has magnificent support from Stuart Hodes as the husbandman, Bertram Ross as the revivalist and Matt Turney as the pioneer woman, and Yuriko, Helen McGhee, Ethel Winter and Miriam Cole as the followers of the revivalist. Photographed and directed by Peter Glushanok and produced by Nathan Kroll, this film is an American dance document that is likely to have an international success when it is distributed by Rembrandt Films.

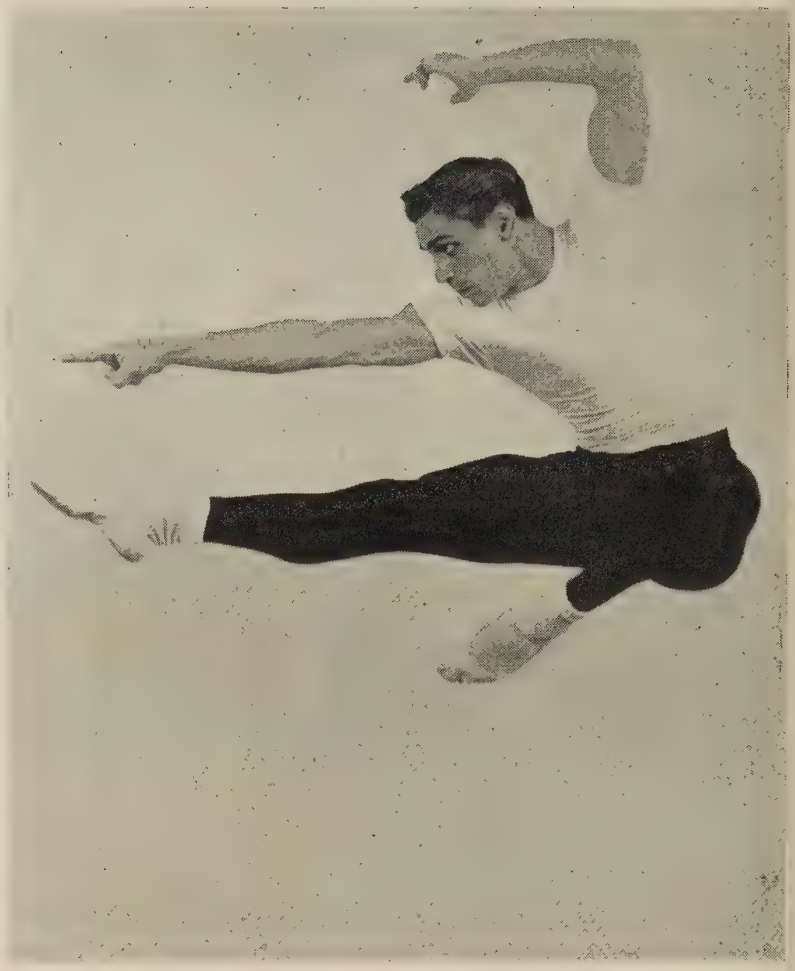
The Art of Making Dances

TRADITIONALLY, dance books are reviewed in the book review section of this magazine. However, Doris Humphrey's *The Art of Making Dances* is more than just another book — it is an event of major importance that has been long awaited by the American dance field as a whole. Published by Rinehart & Co., it costs $6.50.

Doris Humphrey was, of course, one of the giants of American modern dance, and her influences and innovations are apparent everywhere in the field. Even at the early stage in her career, when she was a soloist in the Denishawn Company, she worked with Ruth St. Denis as co-choreographer in developing and extending "music-visualisation". (Interestingly enough, many of the fruits of Doris Humphrey's early experiments in this field are visible in the field of contemporary abstract and symphonic ballets.) Later, her choreographic innovations were enormous : dances without music *(Water Study)* ; with a vocal chorus *(The Life of the Bee)* ; with speech and song *(The Shakers)* ; and with the use of the spoken word *(Inquest).*

In introducing her approaches to choreography, Doris Humphrey writes : "The body of this book is a setting forth of my

APPALACHIAN SPRING *FILMED: Two scenes from the film of Martha Graham's famous dance-work which already has had such a success in America. The Aaron Copland score remains intact and Isamu Noguchi has transposed his designs to the screen. Above, The Husband (Stuart Hodes) is seen facing his wife (Martha Graham). Below, The Pioneer Woman (Matt Turney) is seen blessing the Husband while the Revivalist (Bertram Ross) is in the middle of a revival meeting. Martha Graham is seen meditating in the background. This important film is shortly due for international release.*



LEAPING MALES: Left is Roberto Iglesias, whose company returned to New York with such success. Right is Edward Villela, a principal dancer of New York City Ballet, who is considered to be one of the outstanding male members of the company.

approach to this subject, to which I invariably add this prefix: These ideas are not intended to be a formula; they do not pretend to be a magic brew for success. . . . I like to think that choreographic theory and the study of it is a craft, and only that, for I do not claim that anyone can be taught to create, but only that talent or possibly genius can be supported and informed by know-how, just as an architect, no matter how gifted. must understand the uses of steel, glasses and stone."

Dealing with the craft of choreography there are chapters on the Ingredients and the Tools as well as the five parts of design — Symmetry and Asymmetry, Dance for One and More Bodies, the Phrase, the Stage Space and use of Small Groups. Also, there are chapters on Dynamics, Rhythm, Motivation and Gesture, Words, Music, Sets and Props, and Form. Aside from being of invaluable inspiration to professional choreographers and dancers, Doris Humphrey's analysis of the subject should be of equal interest to the dance public since it will enable them to watch and understand dance in a new way. Henry Brook Adams once wrote: "A teacher effects eternity; he never can tell where his influence stops." The same holds true of Doris Humphrey and her very practical source book on choreography. It is, quite truly, her autobiography in art.

The New York City Ballet

THE New York City Ballet's 24th New York season, a four-week early autumn engagement, featured only one revival, *Jeux d'Enfants,* with choreography by George Balanchine and Francisco Moncion, and it must be said regretfully that this slight work, despite the time, effort and skill spent in restaging it, is not of major import. What was, however, was the wonderfully high standard of the company as a whole in a large repertory. One of the highlights has been the return of George Balanchine's *Four Temperaments*, certainly one of his masterworks. One of the most stunning of all Balanchine's ballets, it is doubly interesting to view now since it foretells so strongly the innovations that were to develop further in both *Agon* and *Episodes.*

Some new castings during the season have also been extraordinarily interesting and provocative. Among these were Violette Verdy in the title rôle of *Medea,* Melissa Hayden in *Afternoon of a Faun* and Patricia Wilde in *Swan Lake.* Edward Villela, more than any other male dancer in the company, has continued to progress most strongly. Certainly he is one of the major treasures of this company as is the enormously gifted Violette Verdy.

The New York City Ballet's winter season opens December 8. In the meantime, they will have appeared in Washington and Philadelphia. Erik Bruhn is slated to join them for rehearsals in November and, as we go to press, it appears more than possible that Margot Fonteyn will also join the company as guest star. What a season this should be!

Roberto Iglesias

WHAT might well be termed as impresario Sol Hurok's one-man festival of dance for the 1959-1960 season started with the return of Roberto Iglesias and his company to the Winter Garden Theatre for a two-week season. Once more, Iglesias confirmed the fact that he is a superb dancer, and he is supported by an excellent company. Especially noteworthy were the lovely sisters Rosario and Esperanza Galan and another commanding male, Antonio Espanol, who is a remarkable dancer in his own right. As in previous seasons, some of the smaller, less pretentious numbers were outstanding, particularly Roberto Iglesias' solo, *Gaditanos,* his duet with Rosario Galan to Garcia Lorca's *Soledad Montoya,* and Esperanza Galan's and Antonio Espanol's delightful Mexican folk piece, *El Paloma y la Paloma.* If the larger works still seem to need further experimentation to pull them into form, it must be added that they are, nonetheless, superbly costumed, and most of the décor is on a similarly high and exciting level. What is most important, though, is the fact that Roberto Iglesias is an artist and an enormous force as a stage personality, and it is indeed a welcome relief to see Spanish dancing of such a high level and with such theatrical excitement.

More Hurok Imports

AFTER the Iglesias company set off on its national tour, S. Hurok presented "Bayanihan", the Philippine National Dance Company, at the Winter Garden Theatre (to be reviewed in our next issue), and they will be followed at the New York City Center by "Slask", the Polish State Ballet, from November 3 to 22. Then "Inbal", Israel's dance theatre company, will appear at the

same theatre from November 24 to December 6.

Takarazuka Dance Theatre

THE Takarazuka Dance Theatre from Japan, which was presented by Albert B. Gins at the Metropolitan Opera House for a three-week season, was long on glorious costumes, garish though unusual décor and one or two striking production numbers. More music-hall or vaudeville in appeal, this company was almost the complete artistic antithesis to either the Gagaku or Kabuki dancers we have seen previously. Since this is a company of forty-two women dancers (and very attractive ones, too) it is almost inevitable for monotony to set in when there is no conflict or romantic interest with the opposite sex. What bothered me even more, however, was the very Westernised music, which seemed derivative of every conceivable style from Tchaikovsky to Cole Porter. Perhaps with truly Japanese music many more of the dances and pantomimes on the programme would have come off more strongly. As it was, the *Mortar Drum Dance* and a *Military Drill* were nevertheless highly effective.

Ballet Theatre Workshop

LUCIA CHASE, co-Director of American Ballet Theatre, has been in London, Rome, Copenhagen, Milan and Paris during October making preliminary arrangements for the company's Twentieth Anniversary Season at the Met. next spring. As soon as she returns, she plans to complete her plans for the American Ballet Theatre Workshop programme of four or five new works that will be mounted at the Phoenix Theatre on November 30. Thus far, it is definite that Joe Layton, who choreographed the revival of *On The Town* last season and did likewise for this season's *Once Upon a Mattress* (to be reviewed in our next issue), will mount a new ballet. In the meantime, Layton is staging the musical numbers for *The Sound of Music*, the new Rodgers and Hammerstein musical which stars Mary Martin.

N.Y. City Ballet on Discs

KAPP RECORDS have announced three new albums of music from ballets in the repertoire of the New York City Ballet, all conducted by Robert Irving and the New York City Ballet Orchestra. They are : *Stars and Stripes* and *Western Symphony* ; *The Nutcracker* ; *Agon* and *Firebird*, and will be reviewed in our next issue.

Metropolitan Opera Ballet

NEW YORK City Ballet's Violette Verdy will be guest prima ballerina at the Met. this season in Alexandra Danilova's new court ballet which is to be produced for *The Gypsy Baron*. Danja Krupska will choreograph the interpolated peasant dances for the same opera and Zachary Solov is returning to stage three new ballets for *Aida*.

Primus to Liberia

PEARL PRIMUS, noted American Negro dancer and anthropologist, has been appointed by the Government of Liberia as the first director of a performing arts centre to be set up in the capital city of Monrovia, in affiliation with the University of Liberia. As director of the new centre, she will organise a programme designed to preserve the native dance and the other arts with which it is closely related.

Arthur Todd.

TAKARAZUKA FROM JAPAN : Above, members of the Takarazuka all-girls company from Japan in Bo Odori, *a military dance. Different to other Japanese companies to appear outside Japan this is more of a revue than anything else.*

MAPLE HUNTING (above) : Members of this all-girls company in Momiji Gari. *Below, the finale of this spectacular show,* Okuni-Ohzume.

LA BELLE DAME SANS MERCI—Decor

continued from page 19

Apart from anything else one wonders whether the choreographer in the full flood of creation and in trying to impart it all to the dancer, really has time to give full vent to designing problems. There are so many things that the designer has to think about apart from the mere fact of putting costumes and settings down on paper. For instance materials have to be matched-up, incessant costume fittings have to be attended as well as lighting rehearsals — and a hundred and one little fiddling things that are all the designer's job. All this takes time and wastes physical and mental energy. I may be wrong but I feel that few people in this world can be supreme in more than one thing — the best business man is seldom the best lover, and so on — and the art of ballet calls for people who are supreme in every one of the elements that go to make the whole composite and complex art.

All these thoughts went through my mind as I watched *La Belle Dame sans Merci,* which Andrée Howard has both designed and choreographed. Now I feel it was a very different matter when she did this in the past for the smaller stages on which companies like the Ballet Club, Ballet Rambert and the Sadler's Wells Theatre Ballet used to play, but when it comes to a stage as big and as important as that of Covent Garden then I am not so sure. Nothing about *La Belle Dame* convinced me that this rolling of two jobs into one was a particularly good idea.

Mind you, I think she had set herself an almost impossibly difficult task as Keats' poem is hard enough to turn into a choreographic production, let alone make into any sort of visual spectacle. The weeping gauzes of *Peléas and Mélisande* which I once saw in a masterly production are a rather different thing to the voluminous gauzes which enshroud this work. There is no particular reason why the Knight, who is obviously tough flesh and blue/red blood, should meet a faery's child, even if she was disguised as a beautiful lady, in a no-man's land of greenery-bluery scrim. It gives the whole work a feeling of unreality so that any point there is in the fact that the Knight is duped into believing that La Belle Dame is in fact a woman, was lost. It was impossible to believe that there had been an encounter between two people in any known sort of environment. When the Knight dreams, nothing really happens because his dream world has been with us all the time. The characters seem to spend all their time becoming involved with changing gauzes until the dream and supposed reality become one. There is no beginning, no climax and no end because the "cold hill's side" exists not — or at least is not clearly conveyed if it does. Fantasy only exists in the theatre if it can be placed into immediate juxtaposition with reality.

In actual fact the setting was done with taste and the effect was pretty, but prettiness is not enough in a work whose nebulous theme cries out for something more definite in its designing. A tent-like place dominates one side of the stage and a hedgehog sun passes across the gauzy backcloth, presumably denoting a passing of time — these are the only definite features apart from the costumes. It was, I thought, a pity that the sun got confused with a group of knights when they appeared on a rostrum in the dream sequence.

Again there also seemed to have been a bit of wrong thinking on the part of Howard in her design for La Belle Dame herself. She appears to be more of an Ondine with her dripping green and blue chiffon costume and the "faery's child" aspect is decidedly overdone. The knight was, after all, supposed to fall in love with a lady, not an elfin creature. Her supernatural side should have subtly shown only to the audience right up to the time of the dream. The costumes for the knights were just what one imagines costumes for knights should be. The principal knight's black chain-mail and tights amounted to the most convincing piece of designing in the whole work.

The lighting, which was complicated because it concerned visions and dissolves, was not very satisfactory at the opening performance ; later it improved considerably and managed to surround the ballet with a misty and indeterminate atmosphere.

Could this whole work have been improved by using a designer who was not also the choreographer? To a certain extent — yes. Nothing much could have been done to strengthen the weakness of the basic structure, but another brain at work might have added some twists, turns and surprise elements that would have produced a greater dramatic impact. **P. W.**

PERFORMANCE DETAILS

Running Time

23 minutes.

Audience Reaction

8 calls on first night, none with the lights up. Polite, but not particulary enthusiastic, reception.

Press Reaction

6 stars — rave ; 5 stars — enthusiastic ; 4 stars — favourable ; 3 stars — lukewarm ; 2 stars — unfavourable ; 1 star — pan.

Daily Express ** ; *Daily Mail* ** ; *Daily Telegraph* ** ; *Evening News* ** ; *Evening Standard* * ; *Financial Times* ** ; *News Chronicle* **** ; *Observer* *** ; *The Star* ** ; *Sunday Times* **** ; *The Times* ***.

COVER STORY

This month's front cover is of a member of the Georgian State Dance Company, appearing during November at the Royal Albert Hall, leaping in his natural background in the Caucasus.

THE Georgian State Dance Company is one of the several companies formed in Russia to display the rich wealth of dance and folklore that is to be found in the many, and varied, regions throughout the Soviet Union.

Owing to the fact that this group comes from country around the Caucasus mountains, the dances and the dancers are extremely virile. The proud and war-like lives of the people is reflected in the dances, which are predominantly male, for whom there are numerous incidents of sword fights and which also reflect their background of expert horsemanship. They are able to perform unbelievable leaps and spins at a fantastic speed and with the utmost grace.

The women's dances are undulating and more remote owing to the fact that they have been developed over centuries in the harems of the great Khans.

This company, considered to be one of the finest in Russia and equal to the Moiseyev company from Moscow, makes very rare visits outside its own country but has already scored a sensational success in Paris and New York.

Ballet Dates

THE ROYAL BALLET

at the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden

October
19 *Les Patineurs, Antigone* (world première), *Pineapple Poll*
20 *Les Patineurs, Antigone, Pineapple Poll*
21 *Le Lac des Cygnes* (Fonteyn, Somes)
22 *Coppélia* (Park, Burne), *Façade*
23 *Les Patineurs, Antigone, Pineapple Poll*
24 **(E)** *Le Lac des Cygnes* (Nerina, Blair)
26 *Le Lac des Cygnes* (Fonteyn, Somes)
27 *Ballet Imperial, Antigone, Façade*
29 *Sylvia* (Fonteyn, Somes)
30 *Le Lac des Cygnes* (Beriosova, MacLeary)

November
3 *Sylvia* (Nerina, Blair)
4 *Ballet Imperial, Antigone, Façade*
7 **(M)** *Le Lac des Cygnes* (Beriosova, MacLeary)
7 **(E)** *Ondine* (Fonteyn, Somes)
11 *Le Lac des Cygnes* (Fonteyn, Somes)
14 *Sylvia* (Linden, Blair)
19 *Ondine* (Fonteyn, Somes)
21 **(M)** *Coppélia* (Nerina, Blair)
21 **(M)** *Coppélia* (Nerina, Blair), *Façade*
21 **(E)** *Pineapple Poll, Symphonic Variations, Daphnis and Chloë*
24 *Pineapple Poll, Symphonic Variations, Daphnis and Chloë*
27 *Pineapple Poll, Symphonic Variations, Daphnis and Chloë*
28 *Le Lac des Cygnes* (Beriosova, MacLeary)
30 *Ondine* (Fonteyn, Somes)

December
1 *Les Patineurs, Rinaldo and Armida, The Firebird*
3 *Ondine* (Fonteyn, Somes)
5 *Sylvia* (Beriosova, MacLeary)
9 *Antigone, Symphonic Variations, Daphnis and Chloë*
12 **(M)** *Coppélia* (Sibley, Usher), *Façade*
12 **(E)** *Ondine* (Fonteyn, Somes)

THE ROYAL BALLET (TOURING CO.)

October
12 King's Theatre, Glasgow
19 His Majesty's Theatre, Aberdeen
26 King's Theatre, Edinburgh

November
2 The Globe Theatre, Stockton-on-Tees
9 The Opera House, Manchester
16 Theatre Royal, Nottingham
21 The New Theatre, Oxford
30 The Hippodrome, Bristol

December
7 The Memorial Theatre, Stratford-on-Avon

LONDON'S FESTIVAL BALLET

October
21 Salkoner Centret Theatre, Copenhagen. Followed by a tour of Scandinavia.

November
16 Alexandra Theatre, Birmingham. Followed by a tour of Germany and Italy.

December
26 The Royal Festival Hall, London (2 weeks)

BALLET RAMBERT

October
19 Grand Theatre, Wolverhampton
26 New Theatre, Hull

November
2 Arts Theatre, Cambridge
9 Theatre Royal, Hanley
16 Granada Theatre, Shrewsbury
23 Lyceum Theatre, Newport
30 The Alhambra Theatre, Bradford.

THE GEORGIAN STATE DANCE COMPANY OF U.S.S.R.

at the Royal Albert Hall, London November 9 to 25

SUNDAY BALLET CLUB

at the New Theatre, London, on December 13.

BALLETS DE PARIS DE ROLAND PETIT

at the Adelphi Theatre, London, November 18 to December 12

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THE ROYAL BALLET

November repertory at the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, includes:

SYLVIA ONDINE
PINEAPPLE POLL ANTIGONE
BALLET IMPERIAL FACADE COPPELIA

THE ROYAL BALLET ON TOUR

November 2nd : **The Globe, Stockton-on-Tees**
November 9th : **Opera House, Manchester**
November 16th : **Theatre Royal, Nottingham**
November 23rd : **New Theatre, Oxford**

Repertory includes :

SWAN LAKE SOLITAIRE COPPELIA
LA BELLE DAME SANS MERCI
DON QUIXOTE *pas de deux*

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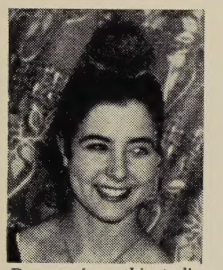

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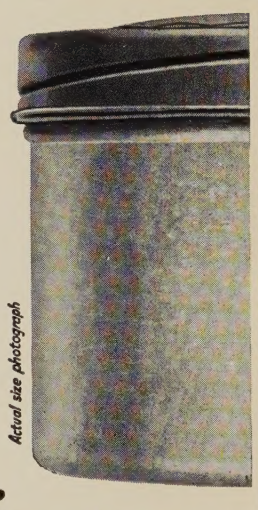

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AND PROMENADE HOME. Agnes de Mille. Dy. 8vo. 304 pp. 25s. 12 pp. illus. April 30, 1959. Autobiography — continuation of this famous dancer's life from *Dance to the Piper*.

ANTONIO AND SPANISH DANCING. Elsa Brunelleschi. Cr. 4to. 96 pp. 18s. Photos. 1958. First full-length critical study of the great Spanish dancer. Among the many illustrations are a number of rare early studies, and a comprehensive selection showing him in his most famous dances.

APPROACH TO THE BALLET. A. H. Franks. Dy. 8vo. 337 pp. 30s. Illus. 1952. 2nd ed.

THE ART OF DANCE IN FRENCH LITERATURE. Deirdre Priddin. Med. 8vo. 176 pp. 10s. 6d. 16 illus. 1952. First attempt on so exhaustive a scale to bring together in easily accessible form what representative distinguished French writers, poets and philosophers for a century past have thought about the meaning and purpose of the dance.

ARTIST'S LIFE. Anga Enters. Dy. 8vo. 447 pp. 30s. Illus. May 1959. One of the world's most versatile artists — dancer, painter, and writer — takes us backstage in this story of her work and travels.

BALLET. Arnold Haskell, C.B.E. 7¼ x 4¼. 224 pp. 2s. 6d. 24 pp. illus. 1938. Rev. 1945, 1949, 1951, 1955. Complete guide to the ballet: its history, its theory, notes of the leading personalities and creators of modern ballet, studies of individual ballets and of some contemporary dancers.

BALLET ANNUAL 1959 (13th Issue). Edited by Arnold L. Haskell. Cr. 4to. Over 150 pp. 25s. Photos. 1958. Record and year book of the ballet with a colour frontispiece, many plates by the leading ballet photographers, and contributions and articles by eminent critics and writers, dancers, directors and choreographers.
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BALLET AND CAMERA. John Hart. Sm.Cr. 4to. 32 pp. 10s. 6d. 48 illus. 1956. Sadler's Wells Dancers behind and on stage.

BALLET DECADE. Edited by Arnold L. Haskell. 9¼ x 6¼. 288 pp. 10s. 6d. Illus. 1956. Record of ballet activity at home and abroad, containing articles and photographs from the first ten issues of *The Ballet Annual*.

BALLET FOR BEGINNERS. Felicity Gray. 10 x 6¼. 61 pp. 13s. 6d. 49 illus. 1952. For practitioners or observers.

BALLET FOR FILM AND TELEVISION. A. H. Franks. Dy. 8vo. 85 pp. 12s. 6d. 1950.

BALLETOMANIA. Arnold Haskell. Dy. 8vo. 352 pp. 12s. 6d. 83 illus. 1934.

THE BALLET-LOVER'S COMPANION. A Guide to Practical Aesthetics. Kay Ambrose. Cr. 8vo. 80 pp. 7s. Illus. 1950 4th imp. Includes sections on choreography, tradition, style, stage sense, physique, 'line', partnering, musicality and many other aspects of ballet.

THE BALLET-LOVER'S POCKET BOOK : Technique Without Tears for the Ballet-Lover. Kay Ambrose. Cr. 8vo. 64 pp. 7s. Illus. 1950. 2nd ed, 5th imp. A vade-mecum for beginners in ballet, for confirmed ballet-goers and for dancers.

BALLET No. 8. Serge Lido (Text by Irene Lidova). 9¼ x 11¼. 114 pp. 45s. Photos. 1958. Lido's photographs reproduced in first-class photogravure have a wide appeal outside ballet circles as well as providing for the balletomane an exciting record of the work of the year's leading dancers. (Copies in print of *Ballet No.* 6, price 35s.)

THE BALLET OF THE SECOND EMPIRE. In 2 vols. I 1847-58; II 1858-70. Ivor Guest. 9¼ x 6¼. I, 133 pp.; II, 148 pp. 25s. each. Illus. I, 1953; II, 1955. Provides an authoritative account of the ballets and dancers of the period and of the distinguished figures in the literary and artistic life of the time.

BALLET OF THREE DECADES. Audrey Williamson. Dy. 8vo. 190 pp. 25s. 42 plates. First book author has written on ballet since 1950, and it therefore has a special interest to those readers who admired her earlier works, *Contemporary Ballet* and *The Art of Ballet*. The present volume covers the whole period of her own ballet-going, from her first visits as a schoolgirl to the present day, and she is thus able to give a remarkably complete picture of the ballet scene over three decades, and a critical judgment of the trends, national and international, through which the art has progressed.

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BARON AT THE BALLET. Edited by Arnold Haskell. 11 x 8¼. 224 pp. 35s. 1950.

BARON ENCORE. Edited by Arnold Haskell. 11 x 8¼. 224 pp. 42s. 1952. Reprint.

BARON'S BALLET FINALE. Edited by Arnold Haskell. 11 x 8¼. 320 pp. 42s. 1958. Last of the Baron books of the ballet. He planned it just before his death after which his friend Arnold Haskell selected the pictures and wrote the text. Covers the development of ballet in England, Europe, America and the Far East and includes a glorious section on the Bolshoi's visit here. More than 190 photographs including four superb colour shots — and they cover all the leading dancers from 1938-56.

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DECCA BOOK OF BALLET. Edited by David Drew. 9¼ x 6. 63s. Illus. 1958.

AN ANATOMY OF BALLET. Fernau Hall. L.Dy. 8vo. 340 pp. 30s. 1953.

ANATOMY AND BALLET. Cecil Sparger, M.C.S.P. C.C.P.E. Cr. 4to. 79 pp. 16s. Illus. 1952. 2nd ed. Provides a simple understanding of the bony structure of the body and the effects upon it of the movements which form the foundations of the dancing of ballet.

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